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THE BACHELOR GIRL













*COULT AVI*

MISS DOUVRE.



# THE BACHELOR GIRL

A Novel of the 1400

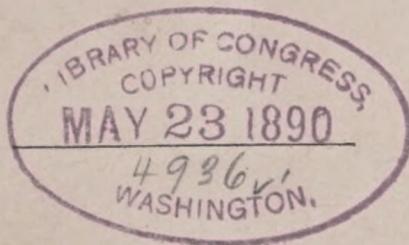
BY

WILLIAM HOSEA BALLOU

AUTHOR OF "A RIDE ON A CYCLONE"

ILLUSTRATIONS BY

H. CLAY COULTAUS



NEW YORK

JOHN W. LOVELL COMPANY

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NEW YORK,



## TO MY MUSE.

HAD I the breath that burns in the simoon,  
Scorching and beating Sahara at will,  
Blasting the desert, scourging the nomad,  
Raging forever and never still,  
Fast would I rise to thee on the mountain,  
Drying the rivers in passing by,  
Burning the forests, burning the meadows,  
Panting, exhausted, with thee to fly.

HAD I the power that whirls in the cyclone,  
Twisting cities and homes from their place,  
Flooding the rivers, wrecking the valleys,  
Rushing forever and e'er through space,  
Fast would I bound to thee on the mountain,  
Smiting the earth with thunders and flame,  
Yearning to greet thee, and to caress thee,  
Rending the skies in calling thy name.

FIERCER than storms that rage on the ocean,  
Dashing ships on the pitiless sands,  
Vaster than floods that swell the Ohio,  
Bearing to tropics bordering lands,  
Is the mad love for thee on the mountain,  
Pulsing, surging, inflaming the veins.  
Simoon and cyclone, come with thy pinions  
And of a whirlwind give me the reins.

WM. H. BALLOU.







## PREFACE.

CERTAIN forces are at work shaping the destiny of the present civilization such as were unknown in any other age of the world. The result is a more extraordinary civilization than the best elements of past ages combined could rival. This is due, first to the development of science ; and second, to the applications of science as fast as it is evolved ; and lastly, to the adaptation of the scientific method in all forms of commercial and business life. That type of fiction which accurately reflects the data and trend of modern civilization alone can hope to survive as the mirror for future generations of what is to-day.



The mere biography of one or even several individual types is not sufficient to satisfy the masterful intellect with which more and more of mankind are becoming endowed. The novel must reveal the data of a mass of mind moving in one channel, and endow the leading characters with the entire product. In order to bring the forces and motives governing a mass of mind, such as the financial mass, the scientific mass, the insurance mass, the statesmanship mass, or any other mass of mind moving in one channel of thought, down to the comprehension of all, even the children, only the stupendous plot will suffice to maintain uninterrupted interest and prevent the reader from skipping paragraphs and pages.

In presenting a new type of fiction, such as "A Ride on a Cyclone," "The Bachelor



Girl," etc., with new types of hero, heroine, and plot, the data of this, the greatest, grandest civilization is utilized—not the data of any individual life, but that of a mass of minds moving in one channel of thought. Thus the characters are made composites of a mass of people, made to speak and act for the mass, not as any one individual of it.

Fiction should satisfy the longings of the human mind, achieve its ideals and broaden, by example, the intellect. It is to be hoped that the characters herein depicted so live and move and have their being that the youths who read of them may be helped to grow into a grand satisfying existence. They who have the attention of the youths of this age will mould the destiny of the next.

W. H. B.







# THE BACHELOR GIRL.

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE TRANSLATION OF MISS DOUVRE.

Miss Lily Carolyn Douvre indignantly scanned the man at her side, as a student might scan the blank verse of Virgil who would rather be kicking a foot-ball on the campus than receive a hundred-mark for proficiency in Latin. She urged her powerful bay horse at a speed which attracted the attention of the mounted police, who would have either halted the pair for a stern lecture or arrested them outright but for the respect they entertained for Douvre senior,



one of the wealthiest members of New York's Fourteen Hundred,\* a retired coal merchant, by the way, and a plebeian acquisition of the aristocracy, who had always been liberal in his donations to the officers of the law. The man by her side managed to keep abreast with her with difficulty.

"Why ride so furiously, Miss Douvre?" he implored. "The police are watching us, and besides, my horse is jet black. You must be aware that a black horse has not so much endurance in limb, blood, muscle, and wind as a bay horse."

"Right glad am I that 'tis so, my Lord Hector. Do you not see it is dark already

\* The Czar of New York's aristocracy, Mr. Ward McAllister, has recently increased his original "Four Hundred" by one thousand names. He did it because every city and town in the country constituted a local Four Hundred in imitation, and he felt that the reputation of the metropolis was endangered.





“ WHY RIDE SO FURIOUSLY, MISS DOUVRE ? ” HE IMploRED.







owing to the gathering storm; that I am the only woman visible on the Central Park track; that I may be compromised by this unexpected escapade?"

"But Lily—Miss Douvre, I love you. I desired to tell you of my passion on this homeward ride. Promise to marry me and there can be no compromising you."

"Was it for this, my Lord, you detained me at the north end of the park to view the proposed World's Fair site, that odious gathering to be, perhaps, of the masses who are to overrun our city, put up the price of living five hundred per cent., turn a rabble into the West End District, which was sacredly set apart for the Fourteen Hundred, and trample down this very park? For shame, my Lord! It is my money you desire, not me."



“Suppose it be your money, as well as your charming person, I want, what then? Isn’t money a desirable thing for two young people with which to begin keeping the establishment of an earl?”

The lady turned upon him in superb scorn. Flushed as were her cheeks by reason of violent exercise, their tinge deepened with almost uncontrollable anger at this brutal frankness.

“You speak so frankly, my Lord, that I may be pardoned for a frank reply. The assurance of these broken-down relicts of the nobility in attempting to utilize American heiresses to pay their gambling debts, and roof over their decayed, antiquated palaces is beyond compare. My father recently took the pains to inform me somewhat concerning your affairs. So long as you conducted



yourself as we deem a gentleman should in this young republic I have continued to tolerate your society, and have endeavored to treat you with that consideration due to a scion of a noble house. There is no further incentive for such toleration and treatment. My father told me, from information and belief, as the courts say, that the very horse you ride, and of whose physiological structure you discourse so eloquently, your clothes, your style in general, are obtained through advances by a broker,\* to whom on your marriage, presumably with me, is to be reimbursed at one hundred per cent. Bah ! how absurd in you to talk of love ! Had you been honest, told the truth, and advanced a proposition of marriage in business form,

\* See article, by the author, in the New York Tribune of October 18, 1885, entitled "Borrowing Money to Marry."



such proposition might, at least, have received respectful consideration. I should then have continued to be polite to you. Since you have tried to humbug us, I tell you plainly, the fortune I possess, if I were so base as to desire it, and which I do not, would purchase a prince. A mere earl, forsooth ! You must read the papers and know that the precedent has recently been established as to what figure will bring down a prince. As a matter of fact, I do not mind telling you that I am an eccentric, and desire nothing better than a rich but respectable American."

"My dear Miss Douvre, your remarks show more rage because you are compromised than discretion. You may or may not live to regret them. Some people die earlier than others. You are compromised



socially to all the world by this escapade at night with a man, unaccompanied by either coachman or chaperone. Unless you marry me or have an immediate announcement of marriage to me promulgated, the club-men and local gossips will have a feast of scandal for many a day."

"Stop, my Lord! Further insult is unnecessary. No one can possibly know of this affair unless you repeat it. In that case, I shall see to it that your backing for an heiress by a broker and the terms thereof are made public; then your prospects of further social recognition will be blighted."

"Oh, well, that beats me on that score. I am not one to sacrifice myself to that extent, even to win you. But let us examine the question from another standpoint. I should say in general that the wife of an earl, no



matter what the cost, would have a more pleasing sense of security in society in all the courts of the world than a mere daughter of a retired coal merchant. Further, you say I love your money, not you. Granted. Your money is a part of you, isn't it? Suppose you believed I love you on account of your glossy black hair, would you then marry me?"

"That would be different."

"Suppose you were certain I love you in consideration of your perfect figure, would you then marry me?"

"That is another question altogether."

"Suppose you knew I love you because of your glorious brown eyes?"

"I should consider the matter."

The girl did not see the trap into which she was being led. The rapid riding, the



thoughts suggested by the events of the ride may have distracted her mind from the conversation somewhat. For the first time she turned to read his face beneath an electric lamp, to determine if these were implied compliments, and if so, if he might possibly be in earnest. Her vanity, that natural heritage of the sex, of which she actually had but little, was being stirred.

“Suppose you were certain I love you, because I think you are the most beautiful creature on earth, would you then marry me?”

He had sounded the deepest depths of feminine vanity at last. She turned on him, momentarily softened. The man smiled in ill-concealed triumph. “Did I believe that, I might give up my project of an American alliance, my one eccentricity.”



My lord had won his triumph, but in his next breath he threw it away; he made a fatal mistake. He clinched the argument, as masterful as even Socrates might have desired, and beat a woman in discussion. In one fell swoop, as it were, he descended from the highway of possible success to the rout of utter defeat. "My dear girl," he remarked, triumphantly, "what then does it matter which thing about you attracts me, so long as you possess an irresistible attraction? You have admitted that once you believe I love you because of your glossy black hair, or perfect figure, or glorious brown eyes, or because to my thought you are the most beautiful of women—once you believe any of these and you might be persuaded to marry me. Now, isn't your wealth as much a part of you, as much your exclusive prop-



erty as your hair, figure, eyes, or beauty? You stand convicted. Knowing that I love you on account of that most charming attribute of woman—wealth—can you not give me a word of hope?”

She turned on him fiercely. “Monster,” she cried, “begone from my sight! I will not be disgraced by having you near me on the track. I shall stick to my eccentricity,” she said mockingly, seeing the chagrin on his features. “I go to my rich but respectable American ——”

At that instant the pair were midway between two electric lights, situated some distance apart, enveloped in darkness so dense, owing to the bursting of a furious storm, that even near objects were invisible. Suddenly the horses reared and screamed with fright. Then some black object, like a me-



teor, struck both horses simultaneously and killed them instantaneously. A howl of pain from the man, and a screech of abject fright from the girl, rang through the air. The mounted police and late equestrians rushed to the spot. The horses were found frightfully gored. My Lord Hector lay on the grass, some twenty feet away, moaning, but evidently more frightened than hurt. The police attempted to assist him, but he repulsed them.

“Look after Miss—the lady,” he roared, “D—n it, she may be hurt.” As his lordship awoke to the possibilities the loss of her life meant to him he became frantic.

“Did you say there was a lady, sir?” asked a policeman, hurriedly.

“Of course! To be sure! Don’t you see her horse?”



“Could she have walked home, sir?”

“Certainly not. Her horse was killed by that accursed meteorite. She must have been thrown as far as was I.”

Lanterns were brought, but no trace of the lady was visible, not so much as her hat or a bit of ribbon. The disappearance was absolute, proved unaccountable, and irrefutable. Twenty men were on the scene of disaster in less than a minute after it occurred. She could not have escaped without being seen.

Meantime his lordship was busily thinking, and almost distracted. He at least had a heart sufficient to deplore the occurrence on humane grounds, to say nothing of what it might mean to him. It occurred to him that if she had escaped and run home to avoid detection, here was a chance to win her gratitude. The police surrounded him



and assisted him to arise. When placed against a tree he was able to stand. A little examination showed that he was only suffering from a temporary loss of all his breath. The police cross-examined him.

“Who was the lady, sir?” asked one.

“I decline to answer.”

“But you must. All the evidences are here to show that you had a companion, presumably a lady. There is a dead horse, with the torn remains of a side-saddle on its back. Unless you can throw some light on this mysterious case you stand in danger.”

“I will only admit that I was riding with a lady. A mysterious calamity overtook our horses. I am surprised that I live to tell of it. What has become of my companion is as much, and infinitely more, my concern than yours. Tell me what caused



the calamity and I will tell you who she was, for I believe her dead, carried away by the mysterious object from the heavens which gored the horses. You can see it was not lightning, since there has been none, and electrical evidences are not visible on the animals. I believe it was a meteorite."

The policemen consulted. It was evident that no human agency had caused the disaster. They began to doubt if there was really a lady in the case. "What is your name, sir?" demanded a sergeant of police.

"Lord Jasper Hector, Earl of Bathgate, Devonshire, England."

The name was not unknown; he was believed.

"What are your reasons for withholding the name, which might lead to some clue?"

"My reasons are perfectly proper. The



lady was of such high standing that to reveal her name would bring down world-wide gossip on an innocent head and proud home. Besides, it is my place to apprise the family. If the lady does not return to her home, the case will then properly come before the police. The inspector will be at once apprised; that stands to reason. Here is my card and address. If I do not find her at home, if she is missing to-morrow, I stand ready to appear and repeat to the department what I have already explained."

The police were far from satisfied, but they did not feel warranted to hold the man in the absence of a corpse and of conclusive evidence that there really was a woman in the case. His lordship walked away. The belated equestrians hurried to their dinners.

The police, left to themselves, saw the



necessity of further action. They knew, as well as anything is ever positively known, that the lady, if there were one, could not have escaped and gone home. Not a moment had elapsed before several of them had been on the scene of disaster where they had noted everything. The sudden stoppage of the horse was sufficient to have thrown the lady a long distance, at least twenty or thirty feet. She would have been too seriously hurt to have got up and walked away. That there had been a lady in the case became more and more evident upon examination. To suppose that his lordship was out riding, leading a lady's horse all saddled, was too much for belief. The morning would surely convince his lordship of the lady's absence, and the affair would have to be fully investigated.



With these self-evident facts in view no time was to be lost. An extra detail of officers was summoned. The coroner was notified; detectives were placed on the ground. The park for hundreds of feet was thoroughly explored. Surgeons from the Bellevue Hospital were summoned to examine the horses. The frightful lacerations led them at once to coincide with the meteorite theory; there was nothing else to report, no other tenable evidence.

Along with the coroner came a bevy of reporters. The police, detectives, surgeons, coroner, his assistants, and the reporters studied the case until past midnight; all was excitement, and the biggest sensation of the times threatened to be inaugurated. Reporters were detailed to find the Earl, and get interviews in addition to the reports of



his testimony given to the police. The coroner, true to the traditions of his office, felt called upon to do his duty. He impanelled a jury on the spot, and secured a verdict in time for the morning papers, if for nothing more, to help the reporters weave a sensation.

The coroner's jury declared, having no remains *de facto* to sit upon, but *de jure*, because of the alleged translation of the subject, that "some woman, unbeknown to this said jury, came to her death by a meteor, which carried her body into the infinitudes of homoloidal space."

The coroner mopped his brow uneasily when he signed his name and affixed his seal of office to this document; but a reporter of the *Tall Tower* newspaper, fresh from college, who had penned the report of the jury,



assured him it was "the right stuff," as he had read it in some one of the works of Richard A. Proctor or Herbert Spencer. He wasn't certain which great authority gave birth to the expression of "the infinitudes of homoloidal space," and his paper later discharged him from its *sanctum sanc-torum* of accuracy, fearing the coroner might repeat the fact of the uncertainty of the reporter in this important matter, to the detriment of the daily. "Remember hereafter," said the editor, as he bowed out the poor collegian, "it was Proctor who said it, and that a man who represents the *Tall Tower* must always be accurate."

It was cruel to send him out in such a night. The storm which swept away nearly every vestige of civilization on Coney Island was in progress.



## CHAPTER II.

### THE FAMILY OF DOUVRE.

Mr. John Douvre sat in his smoking-room. The very large apartment was exquisitely finished in Russia-leather designs, with heavy oak-chairs to match, cushioned and backed with the same material. There were many gentlemen with him, deeply interested in exchanging views upon architecture and other subjects. A centre-table, the top of which comprised a slab of black, polished marble, was covered with boxes of the choicest cigars, of varied brands, sizes, and shades, from which the men occasionally made selections. Mr. Douvre was quiescent, seeming to listen, yet seeming to think. A



funkey appeared at the door and announced, "My Lord Hector!"

"Ask him to wait in the drawing-room."

The celebrated artist Sarsan seemed annoyed by the interruption, but he continued to descant on the topic on which he had been speaking.

"The New York home," he observed, "is quite unlike that of any other American city. Its dwellings have no environing lawns, but are so massed together that one wall supports the ends of two roofs. No well-regulated household knows the names of the occupants of the adjoining dwellings, and such knowledge would deprive every New Yorker of the absolute privacy which is the greatest charm and inducement to metropolitan life.

"Exterior effects in the dwelling architecture of the city have not been extensively



attempted, and only in the uptown districts, where the architect has perhaps designed an entire square, and has made each front harmonize with each and all of the adjoining fronts. The Western man, in whose home one is entertained, often takes pride in telling one that 'the elegant mansion which can be seen through field-glasses on the adjoining lot is the property of Mr. So-and-So, and it cost him so many hundred thousands.' "

"Pretty large lawns, those," said Mr. Douvre, laughing.

Sarsan elevated his eyebrows slightly, and continued :

"While architectural effects in Western provincial cities are too often regarded only from a stand-point of cost, those of the metropolis are rated from the actual amount of luxurious home comforts and taste to be found



in the interiors. The provincial homes are usually judged, and the importance of the citizen is correspondingly ranked, first, by the cost; second, by the size of the exterior and the rooms; and lastly, as is unfortunately too frequently the case, by the display of intense contrasting colors of the furniture, which sometimes cause the drawing-rooms to resemble furniture warerooms. Contrasting colors in a house indicate a lack of artistic culture; harmonious colors speak of refinement.

“Only artistic effects are studied in behalf of New York’s palatial residences. No matter how ignorant, untutored, and uncultured the barbarian may be who arrives in New York with untold millions, with which to set up an establishment and become one of the aristocracy, he can neither buy nor drive any reputable firm to inharmonious taste.”



Mr. Douvre, being one of this species, winced, but the artist, not knowing the fact, proceeded :

“The New York furnisher is polite, and listens without exhibiting a shadow of the contempt he feels to the monstrosities the barbarian demands; but he will never yield to any deflection from the standards of taste. First, there is the architect who designs the residence. He will exhibit his specimens of styles from which to make selection, or will, if consistent to taste, design the structure from the desires suggested; but once a design is selected, he will make no alteration whatever, unless the entire house is changed to harmonize. He would lose his reputation as an architect if an inharmonious flaw were detected. His rivals would reap a harvest from his error, and errors in architectural de-



signs are unpardonable. The contractor is responsible for every detail of architectural design, and he leaves the structure in readiness for the furnishers."

"There is no doubt on that score," thought Douvre.

"The carpet man is next consulted. He examines each story, and notes, for instance, that the first story is finished in light oak, the second in dark oak, the third in cherry, and the fourth in ash, or that the entire house is finished with most costly woods. He makes a memorandum in each room of each story to ascertain what the painters and decorators have done for the ceilings and walls. Having complete memoranda—since no two floors are alike, and seldom two rooms, though each harmonizes with all the others—he proceeds to carpet the house



in harmony as his data directs. He will take no dictation in this matter except in the species of carpets desired, whether velvet, or Brussels, etc. His reputation helps to make each house what it is, and he will permit no living man to tarnish his reputation. The furnisher has the next entry. He must complete the harmonies already established by the architect, painters, decorators, and carpet-man. He will only desire to know the price the occupant will pay. He examines the entire house as minutely as did the carpet-man, and takes away more memoranda because of the carpets. Every piece of furniture he puts in the house must positively harmonize in colors with every other piece, the carpets, ceilings, and walls. There is no alternative; take his dictum or look elsewhere. He is a part of the ma-



chinery of house construction, each part of which is a specialist who has given his life to the study of harmonies, each in his department. The owner, not having made a study of the architectural arts, is not qualified to determine what is needful ; his place is to pay the bills. The furnisher will not so much as change a chair. His chairs, settees, stools, and whatsoever, with carpets, ceilings, walls, and woodwork, form a harmonious picture, as beautiful as a painting. To introduce a foreign element, such as an odd, wayfaring chair, would be, to his mind, worse than putting a cow's head on a horse. Will he, for your gold, disgrace his reputation for artisticity? Not he."

"The only man who ignores harmonies is the plumber. He plumbs only for the plumber," ejaculated Mr. Douvre. All



laughed, relieved to see that the host was not disgruntled at these pictures of his own experiences.

“There can be no doubt that the culture of the members of the machine of architectural construction made New York residences the eye-inspiring, luxurious-comfort palaces they are. Many a New Yorker has lost his appetite in the provincial dining-room of some mushroom magnate, where contrasting colors prevailed and glared his eyes out of joint. The New Yorker’s dining-room, his service, and his surroundings compel one to eat. Even the confirmed dyspeptic who enters here can be no exception. The New Yorker’s home was not built as a subject about which to boast as to its cost, but to enjoy life at its best, to give his friends real entertainment, and to



educate the refined senses of his children. The provincial, particularly in newer sections of the country, is not so advanced. He is beset by beasts of trade, who, knowing the love of a mushroom magnate to boast, load his home with gaudy gewgaws, fill his drawing-room with furniture of all high, mixed colors and descriptions, each piece, with apparent unconsciousness, having the tag of its high cost left conveniently attached. His entertainments to friends are notorious for a lavish waste of high-priced wines and foreign-named viands, of which the participants are ignorant, and who, with the magnate, wonder why the caterer does not place all the 'stuff' on the table at once rather than serve it in courses. Campanini was, doubtless, the only artist who traversed this continent in both directions



without destroying his voice and digestion. He was accompanied by his own *chef*."

The artist paused, and Mr. Douvre began to breathe again. The fact was that the Douvre family had acquired a knowledge of harmonies and taste in all these things by actual experience, and profited by it. Mr. Douvre, when he deserted the Pacific coast to reside in New York, and become a member of the metropolitan aristocracy, suddenly exhibited discretion. A man who has acquired a fortune by sheer ability, through years of energetic toil, can be discreet. An illiterate person who suddenly finds the dame in a gold lode, and emerges from a hole in the ground a hundred millionaire, cannot learn discretion under twenty-five years, if ever. Douvre had listened to the architect and his successors in the house-



building with a wise look, gave an affirmative answer to all suggestions, a *carte blanche* for everything, and paid the bills as a matter of fact. No one ever denied the perfection of his great residence. By his policy of discretion, carried out faithfully in every move, he won immediate entry into the most select circles of metropolitan aristocracy. His home was so pleasing to all the senses, so luxuriously comfortable, that although for years, if ever, he could not personally enjoy it, the aristocracy, or rather plutocracy, of both sexes and all ages, speedily took pleasure in it.

“My Lord Hector!” again announced the flunkey.

“Ask him to come in here; I had quite forgotten him.”

His grace entered the smoking-room. He





ON ACCOUNT OF THE CLOUD OF SMOKE HIS CONDITION PASSED UNOBSERVED.







was deathly pale and agitated, but on account of the cloud of smoke his condition passed unobserved. He glanced at the men assembled in positive dismay. He was too well-bred to call Mr. Douvre from his friends, and, even in this emergency, he feared that to do so might expose an accident to the girl which had best be kept secret for the present. On the other hand, if she were in the house, he would be laughed at. There was but one thing to do. He must sit down with the party and await the departure of the guests, whom he knew would soon seek the clubs or opera.

“Sit down, my Lord, and smoke with us. I should have invited you in at once, but I imagined your name was announced to me by mistake, that your call was upon the ladies.”



His lordship bowed; he could not trust himself to speak. He lighted a cigar.

“Mr. Sarsan has been describing New York architecture, and, incidentally, my own experiences as a Pacific coast mushroom magnate who located here.” Sarsan looked horrified. “Such being the case, I feel like making some personal confessions, and unfolding my theories, even at the expense of exhibiting some family vanity. My daughter, Miss Lily, entered this, no doubt, inspiring environment when a child. There was some blue blood in the family in the more remote ancestry. What American can say otherwise? Did not England, with her best blood, quell the savage, and make this country fit territory, in part, for a great republic before she was turned upon and thrashed for doing it? From her and France and Holland is



the blue blood which every American can trace in his veins. Having entered this home as a child, the environment revived the faint streak of blue blood in her dainty veins, and finally tainted all her system with the hue. She grew up to fit every niche in the realm of aristocracy. It became her first nature to be governed by all the forms, proprieties, fashions, and fads that sweep the horizon of aristocracy. There is not a scion of the proudest American lineage, or the noblest foreign house who does not recognize her fitness to her acquired place; acquired because I purchased it outright. A leading trait of the American is adaptation to environment. In this country we only recognize possession. We are tolerant as to how possession was acquired. It isn't the *modus operandi* but the bird in hand we consider.



“In the South, ancestry may save a man from the gallows and jail; in Philadelphia a woman probably belongs to the aristocracy if she dresses in black; the man, if he never smiles. But in other parts of America wealth alone is the bird in hand.”

The great, but embarrassed, artist seized the pause which followed these frank remarks to put himself at ease. “I had no idea, when I was speaking, of the personal reference in my remarks, Mr. Douvre, and I trust you will pardon my ignorance of your past life. That shows how utterly ignorant most people are of each other’s histories. It is hinted that once upon a time New York fell into the hands of a political trust, which, while professing to belong to one party, was really independent of all parties, being able to perpetuate itself by its own votes. It is



hinted that the heads of four city departments who were the leaders in this trust, had each murdered a man and had escaped conviction by 'hung' juries, or juries a portion of whose members had been corrupted and voted for acquittal. It is even said that the head of the city government in those years had been a proprietor of numbers of liquor stores and saloons, which he transferred to some other name when elected, and was enabled, by the aid of a real estate ring, to which he pandered, to acquire wealth and get a standing in our very aristocracy. I merely mention these things to show how little we know of each other in New York, and how short our peoples' memories are, as an excuse for treading on your toes.

"What I would be happy to speak concerning is Miss Douvre. Some people pause



to speculate how she got her wonderful brown eyes, in conjunction with jet black hair. When we see a head of ebony-black hair we naturally look for the dark, gray-blue eyes of the Scotch-Irish girl, or the dark chestnuts of the Hebrew or Indian belle. Yet the Douvre phenomenon is to be found in America, without the composition of any of these types. In nearly all such instances, as in this, such a combination of eyes and hair are accompanied by a voluptuous, willowy form, and the height of the Venus de' Medici. There is a charming grace of lines in the arm and each contour, whether in limb, or head, or bust, or feature. This combination is not becoming to the Venus di Milo; she is a half head too short for it.

“There are two predominant natures in



men, the iron will and the yielding. The yielding man has spasms of desire for possession when he looks at such a girl, and forges forward to his doom. The iron-willed man, while not so spasmodic, at least acknowledges the sensations she inspires."

Mr. Douvre acknowledged these compliments with some pride, and said: "The New York fashionable girl leads a fast life, in so far as that phrase applies to a multiplicity of late hours at operas, theatres, and in social life; but she offsets by equestrianism, plenty of sleep, and exercise, the effects of her social dissipations. The girl of fashion is seldom sick or unhealthy, in the metropolis, in modern times. She has every advantage and few dangers. She can dissipate considerably, enough to kill once a month a country-bred girl. The reason lies in the



care taken of her person. She has the Turkish bath, the manicure, the hair-dresser, the French maid, the horse, the victoria, everything with which to rally all her physical energies by day as an offset to extreme tension in social enjoyments by night. Dancing adds strength and grace to her figure. Champagne and cigarettes, if indulged in—and they are to some extent—might lead to deterioration were it not for her annual appearance at the springs, either near home or abroad, which rejuvenate her.”

“The springs at home are not thus conducive to health,” observed the inveterate punster always present in every assembly, however small, and who defends himself by alleging that Shakespeare was the father of puns. “They are too cold and rainy. But the girl aristocrat seldom endures New York



during Lent; you will find her at the Ponce de Leon, in St. Augustine, or at the St. Charles Hotel, in New Orleans."

"Miss Lily is careful," continued the father. "She recognizes that the sway of the fashionable woman ends with the loss of a single charm. Her idea, carefully nurtured, is to be temperate or moderate in all indulgences, in order that her every charm should outlive her. She don't care, perhaps, how many girls are driven prematurely to the drug store, so long as she never enters its portals. She rides a horse with the same end in view, not caring, perhaps, how many examples of heads smashed on curbstones and trees there might be, so long as she is not one of them. Not that she is unpossessed of pity or sympathy, but is not included in these categories, may be put down as the reason of her thought



—if reason has any place in the economy of the female nature.

“Of course you know that the pride of Miss Lily, as of every girl, no matter what her station in life, is her boudoir. One of these feminine daily newspaper correspondents who, somehow, manage to invade the very *sanctum sanctorum*s of the American homes, no matter how sacred or guarded, once described my daughter’s boudoir in a noble daily. Here is the account *verbatim*.”

The father produced a newspaper clipping, and read as follows :

“ ‘Miss Douvre is the brown-eyed, black-haired type of girl,’ says this veracious correspondent. ‘Her boudoir was furnished with a view to forming a becoming background for her own loveliness. The walls are of rough-finished plaster, colored a pale, dull





HER BOUDOIR WAS FURNISHED WITH A VIEW TO FORMING A BECOMING  
BACKGROUND.







gold, with a frieze of dull, gray-green flowers. The hangings and carpets are of the same dull green, and the curtains are embroidered with gold of a tint to match the walls. On either side the deep tiled fireplace, with its brass andirons, is a wide lounge. That on the right is covered with a tiger-skin, the head of it lying on the floor and making a footstool for the occupant's slim, slippered feet. This and the opposite lounge, which is covered with a black bear's skin, is heaped with cushions of a pale gold and red that is almost black, it is so dark. At the end of one of these lounges stands a tall, scrolled brass lamp, with a pale gold shade, and underneath it a table of pierced copper-work from Persia, which holds a set of Persian porcelain cups and saucers, and an old Persian silver teapot for afternoon tea. On either



side of the window stands a big, dull red earthen jar which holds a tall palm, which is almost a tree, and the two form an arch of green over the window. There is a long Louis Quinze table near the window, fitted with all appliances in silver for writing. There are book-shelves, many deep, soft chairs, and a Louis Quinze cabinet, holding some very rare and beautiful specimens of Venetian glass, which, with the etchings that hang on the wall, are the beauty's special weakness.'"

All laughed at this newspaperial effort save Lord Hector, who sat dumb, his face showing great mental agony. He was terror-stricken, wondering if the guests would ever go.

"This account reads very well," continued Mr. Douvre, "and is, doubtless, in the main,



correct, though it may be questioned if the girl really has hangings in her room. The laws in reference to executions are very strict as to the places for such penalties. Miss Lily, as may be surmised, is a modern bachelor girl. She lives a club life, though exclusively in her own home. She plays billiards expertly, though from a motive—and motive governs every modern act—as the exercise greatly beautifies her arms, besides showing her person, in the parental billiard hall, to the best advantage.”

The artist Sarsan observed that he was glad to hear the truth concerning this girl. “She is rapidly becoming duplicated throughout all fashionable circles,” he remarked. “We should look at her as she is and determine her value to this civilization. We have had so many heroines in fiction



who were lauded as good cooks that there seems to be no further public demand for that class, first, because the modern young man doesn't desire to marry a cook, but, particularly, because to the epicure no woman ever could cook. Indeed, where a woman's dinner would be considered dear at fifty cents, we pay from ten to fifty dollars and upward at Delmonico's for the privilege of being well fed once each day, at least, and by a man. Miss Douvre has hobbies, I believe, other than those mentioned, such as a kennel, and is fond of her dogs in proportion to their decent behavior and cleanliness. She is not known to have tried the experiment of leading one in the street and stopping at each lamp-post to extricate the chain-wound dog; but this, possibly, may have been due to the fact that her self at-



tractions are sufficient anywhere; she needs no devices to be conspicuous. The fact that everywhere on the streets people invariably turn to observe her stately beauty demonstrates that. The fashion of turning around in the streets to observe a beautiful woman, and of surrounding and following her in crowds in the ball-room and hotel parlors, originated in the South in pro-slavery days. It is an importation and acquirement in New York.

“The standard of measure of the modern girl is principally wealth. There is no use of disguising or apologizing for the fact. In the wonderful progressiveness of this country there could be no other result. Let us look at what is true. Everything we regarded with contempt a few years ago we laud to-day. The modest girl, the plain girl,



the good domestic girl, the this, that, and the other girl, has dropped out of the race. The first question asked by man or woman old enough to marry is in reference to the wealth involved ; beauty, family, and social position are afterthoughts. It could not be otherwise in the increasing multiplicity of our wealthy homes. Herein the domestic girl is sadly out of place. Everything about a house to-day is conducted professionally, by experts in every department. We want our food actually cooked and up to the standards of the highest art. Invention has revolutionized the processes of cleaning a house, lighting it, warming it, airing it, and caring for it. The entire machinery for its operations, of all descriptions, is located low down in the basements, where a feminine head of a household is scarcely allowed to



go, even if she desires. There is the engineer, the *chef*, the modern inventions and appliances, of which only experts are cognizant. A girl might as well hope ever to learn how to manage the Western Union Telegraph Company, as to conduct the arrangements of a modern residence. Do not let us be so silly as to evade the new era and its complete transformation of the aristocratic home and its effects on the present and coming generations. The modern girl-aristocrat touches a button for what she wants, and there her domestic training must necessarily end. It takes a good share of her time to learn how to properly live in a modern establishment, to say nothing of acquiring a knowledge of any one department of it."

"By the way," observed a presidential



possibility present, "it is amazing that an incorporation so highly watered as the Western Union should be presided over by a Kentuckian."

"Oh, well," remarked the real owner of the Western Union, good humoredly, "it is only the stock which is watered, not the president."

The artist took advantage of the pause following the laugh and continued :

"Miss Douvre was a creature of environment, a beautiful and rare creature. If you ask of what earthly use such a girl is to the world, I answer by asking you, in the light of a century hence, when all of us have disappeared, what earthly use the existence of any one is ? The fact of existence at all answers the question. There is nothing more beautiful, of which we have knowledge de-



rived from data, than to live in this world, and to the best of our circumstances and environments. However placed in life, the individual should appreciate the beautiful thing life is according to the light he has. Miss Douvre is of very great use to a large number of people. Her establishment affords much occupation to hundreds in all walks of life. All the servants in the house, all the people in the tailors' and millinery establishments she patronized, the toilet-soap and perfumery manufacturers, the leather merchants, the confectioner, the butcher, grocer, florists, stablemen, gardeners, farmers—the whole circle of human occupation—is kept in motion to a large extent by this girl; and you say 'what good?' Perhaps it might be added that but for her the New York Central Railway would not



run special trains of Wagner cars to Saratoga Springs all the season.

“But there is a more inspiring side to the question of her existence. It is the pleasure she gives to her innumerable associates. Men swarm about her as naturally as migrating birds around the lofty beacon of a light-house, and, no doubt, as many fall, crushed and bleeding, since it is destiny and law that only one man shall have the prize. The bachelor girl is an evolved *quasi* cynic. It could scarcely be otherwise. Marriage to her is an ultimatum, and therefore all men look alike to her, except as they vary in attractions such as physique, looks, wealth, accomplishments, and manners.”

The men dropped their cigar stubs and disappeared at last. His lordship alone remained, much to Mr. Douvre's chagrin, who



wished to have the night to himself. Lord Hector felt, after what he had heard, that the disappearance of Miss Douvre would be equivalent to taking a section out of Manhattan Island. Such a disappearance was destined, if discovered, to cause a world-wide commotion. It would affect a large number of people, each in his own way.

Now that his lordship was alone with Mr. Douvre, only the latter was calm.

"I will neither admit nor deny the presence of my daughter in the house," said Mr. Douvre, when questioned. His whole life was one of policy. It was the place of the flunkey to say whether the girl was "in" or not, according to what instructions she had given. Mr. Douvre did not keep track of whims on that score. His lordship then related the story of her translation, but the



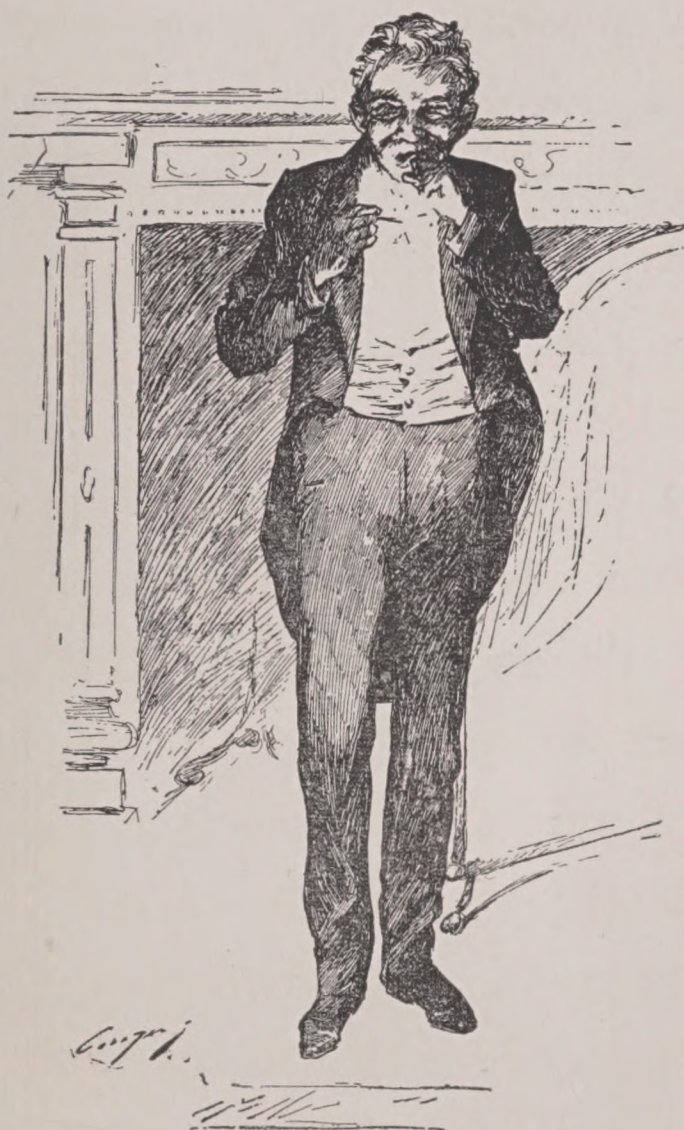
man did not so much as move a muscle. Policy dictated calmness and scorn concerning all theories and suggestions in reference to the accident.

Mr. Douvre had only one answer: "My daughter was well beknown to me; she always did the proper thing, and has done it on this occasion. She will retire, as she always has done, at the proper hour. I do not know where she is at this moment, perhaps" (though he would not admit as much,) "but she is capable of conducting her affairs with propriety, and wherever she may be, that is exactly what she is doing."

Mr. Douvre thanked his lordship for his trouble, merely intimated that such inquiries had best stop where begun, and bowed him out.

When his lordship had departed the sen-





SENIOR DOUVRE LAUGHED.







ior Douvre laughed. To tell the truth, he believed that his daughter had played some prank on the noble to be well rid of him, even at the expense of the loss of her favorite horse. Beyond that he did not investigate.



## CHAPTER III.

### AN HEIRESS IN AIR.

“Are you sure we are fastened?”

“It pulls, sir.”

“Are you sure we are descending?”

“It’s so dark we can’t determine, sir; and we are too near the surface to measure by the barometer, sir.”

“Well, captain, haul in, but slowly; we might strike a tree or a ledge of rocks in this black darkness.”

“Ay, sir.”

“I tell you, Captain,” continued Mr. Pegasus, “the windlass is the thing aboard of a balloon. Those old-time drag-ropes, requiring you to let out all your gas, and ten to



one getting entangled in a swamp where you have no gas with which to ascend, were dangerous to aëronauts. No doubt many a fellow lost his life as a penalty for descent into some jungle where escape, either on foot or in his balloon, was impossible. By means of the windlass on board of the balloon we can wind up our rope after the drag catches, and when near earth can get out or get away in the air-ship, according to the necessities."

"Right you are, sir," muttered the captain.

"Hi, there, Captain!"

"Ay, sir."

"What's the matter with the anemograph?"

"What is, sir?"

"It seems to have stopped registering the



velocity of the wind, else we are moving at a rate of forty miles per hour. That was the rate we were moving, according to the anemometer, before the drag was cast. Are you sure the drag caught? This machine would not stop registering unless we were moving at the same rate as the wind."

"It pulls, Mr. Pegassus, but not so hard as it ought, it seems to me, sir."

"Reel in more rapidly, men. That drag was set for some point near New York. If it really failed to catch we shall soon be over the Atlantic."

"Almost at the end, sir."

There was a pause for two minutes, when the captain excitedly shouted, "All hands, quick, in the name of all that's sacred!"

"What's the matter there?" roared Mr. Pegassus.





HE COULD DIMLY DISTINGUISH SOMETHING.







“There is a dead woman attached to this guy-rope.”

“What infernal nonsense.”

“Please to come here quick, Mr. Pegassus !”

The proprietor of the air-ship gazed over the rail of the car in horror. Shading his eyes with his hands, he could dimly distinguish something. “Pull her aboard !” he thundered.

With great care the men drew aboard the remarkable prize of the guy-rope, and passed the somewhat stiffened form to Mr. Pegassus, who took the girl in his arms, and, in almost terror, proceeded to make an examination.

“Turn on the incandescent lights, one of you ; Smith there ! Captain, the brandy !”

When the lights, which had not been turned on, in order that a landing-place might be more distinctly seen, were in full illumina-



tion, Mr. Pegassus looked at the face with an exclamation of horror, but said nothing. An examination showed a flutter of the heart and color on the face. Brandy was applied, the hands chafed, and other clumsy methods of restoration utilized. At last the form in riding-habit stirred, the eyes opened, and a blush properly transfused itself as the young lady discovered herself in the arms of a man.

“Miss Douvre, I am sure,” remarked Mr. Pegassus, honestly delighted, and relieved beyond measure that his drag had not killed this girl.

She tried to move, but the veins were yet devoid of sufficient flow of blood to encourage the muscles. She looked in his face, a little frightened. “You are that other eccentric, Mr. Pegassus,” she said, “whose hobby is



aëronautics. I rather think I should like an exciting ride in a balloon."

Again she tried to release herself, but failing in requisite strength yielded, and continued to endure his support. The man had become quite calm. He could see that she was unaware of her position, her flight through space. Would it shock her nerves to know the truth? It made him gasp to think of the fearful peril through which she had passed—that dangle in space on the end of two hundred feet of rope, whirling through air at the rate of forty miles per hour—that unheard-of feat of being drawn up unharmed into a balloon! The more he thought of it the more frightened he grew. To think of the trees, the rocks, the possible falls she had escaped!

He began to tremble, stout-hearted, stout-



headed aëronaut that he was. He saw in the twinkle of a star that she must never know of what had passed, or her present predicament. The fright from a revelation of the former might kill her, even if revealed years after. Hysterics might follow, if she knew she were being hurled through air in a balloon. He dared not order the guy-rope lowered again for very fear of such a revelation to her. Indeed the ship must be rapidly ascending. Any orders at present, in her hearing, were impossible. He could only hope to secure her in his own state-room, descend unbeknown to her, and forever keep her in ignorance of her rescue and flight in the clouds.

“That other eccentric?” he repeated, in surprise.

The lady blushed again. Her mind seem-



ed still to be at the point of conversation with the Earl of Bathgate. She tried to reconcile her last-remembered position on her bay horse with her presence in the arms of Julius Pegassus. Failing in this she felt she must say something, and in the end told the truth — that impolitic, much-avoided course of her sex in matters of love. “I was, but a few moments ago, saying to Lord Hector that I was an eccentric because I intend to marry a rich but respectable American, rather than purchase a foreign title.”

Mr. Pegassus was amused, and at the same time surprised. He saw an opportunity, at the expense of rudeness, perhaps, of ascertaining how his guy-rope had caught her, and what became of the drag. “Ah! and so you were with his lordship, or rather, you were getting quit of him?”



“To be sure! We were riding in the park. I wonder what became of my bay horse?” she asked, suddenly.

Mr. Pegassus was alarmed. He became caressing almost, smoothed the glossy black hair with his idle hand, looked deep into her glorious brown eyes, and noted with emotion the peculiar beauty of her face, on which the incandescent electric light emitted soft, mellow rays. He laughed gently.

“Rich but respectable, eh! That is a new one.”

The lady, too, laughed lightly, and seemed to forget the bay horse. “How rare and pure the air is,” she said. “I never experienced more delicious breaths.”

Mr. Pegassus glanced at the barograph, and noted a height of two miles and three-eighths. Surely this thing must stop. He





HE . . . SMOOTHED THE GLOSSY BLACK HAIR WITH HIS IDLE HAND.







arose slowly with his fair burden and placed her on the small couch in his small state-room. "If you will sleep awhile, Miss Douvre, you will feel much better." He paused a moment, heard her murmur, "Good night," like some tired child, then saw that already she was in that wonderful Land of Nod, so near the vast hereafter but in which we enter and emerge without ever being able to describe it. He closed the door and with a bound sprang to the fore.

"Descend, Captain!" he thundered.

"Aye, sir. Man at the valve, there!"

The air-ship began to drop. The owner kept his eye on the barograph. The ship descended a mile and a half, when, with a sudden roar, it careened and darted eastward with great velocity.

"A hurricane!" roared the captain.



“Man at the valve, there, close up! Engineer, there, more gas!”

Directly the balloon began to ascend again until it arose above the terrific storm through which descent in safety was deemed improbable, and, at all events, unnecessary.

“What now, sir?” asked the captain, when the balloon poised majestically, master of the elements.

“Continue to ascend until a current of air is reached bearing west or southwest, otherwise hold her above the cyclone. Have you kept track of the bearings?”

“Aye, sir. We are about fifty miles east of the point where we struck the lady, sir.”

“Then we are over the Atlantic. The drag struck in Central Park. I cannot understand why the lady was not instantly



killed. The drag must have struck something first, a tree, a rock, or perhaps her horse; if the last named, it's a dead animal. That's the only theory of her preservation. The drag, say, struck the horse head on, expended its force and became detached. The guy-rope then formed a loop about the girl's body under her arms; the balloon shot upward and she was spilled of her breath, but was saved from collision. How does that strike you?"

"Admirably, Mr. Pegassus. That is the only possible way to account for it."

When the barometer indicated an altitude of some four miles, the lookout called, "Current due west." As the air-ship arose the air seemed to become a hurricane, corresponding with the earth current but moving in an opposite direction. The ship was



therefore held at the base of the upper cyclone by the engineer for less speed.

Mr. Pegassus, for an amateur, had made wonderful progress in the science of aërial navigation. He was even more proficient in the science than the most advanced schools, because he navigated the air constantly with his dirigible, or directable, balloon. He believed that an immense airship, properly outfitted and having some comforts for travel, could be managed as well as could be expected or even desired.

His great wealth lent him wings in his favorite exercise, and enabled him to accomplish all that the continental nations, in their greed to secure some advantage in warfare over each other, achieved in theory and experiment. While military officers experimented to the extent of governmental appro-



priations, but made little pretence of practice on a large scale, he noted the theories and experiments, adopted them, and sailed considerably, without any damage of note. His balloon was his yacht, but, unlike the yacht, was not in danger of collisions with its kind.

Mr. Pegassus modelled his enormous balloon largely on the principles of Renard and Krebs, M. Gabriel Yon and M. Gaston Tissandier, the noted French aëronauts. He named his ship the *Americus*, before her construction was begun, as if to inspire him in his work.

The balloon's gas-bag, or aërostat, consisted of an envelope of goldbeater's skin. This material is manufactured from the large intestines of oxen preserved in salt, and when ready for use, soaked for twenty-



four hours and afterward washed in several waters. For the *Americus*, Mr. Pegassus selected the finest membranes. The aërostat was cylindrical in form, almost cigar-shaped, with rounded ends and somewhat flattened sides. Its length was 180 feet, diameter 60 feet, with a capacity of some 108,000 cubic feet; it had a lifting power of some five tons when inflated.

A car of wicker-work, almost as large as the aërostat, fortified with brass tubes along its entire length, was suspended by a strong netting of ribbons, sewed to longitudinal elliptical strips according to a geometrical diagram. The ribbons covering were fixed upon the sides of the balloon to two flexible rods, which accurately adapted themselves to its form from one end to the other, and kept the aërostat in shape.



At the centre of the car was placed a Siemens dynamo of ten horse power. From this extended a shaft of steel tubing, which served to supply the power to a fly-wheel, or fan, or rudder propeller, about fifteen feet in diameter, placed exactly on the line of the centre of the aërostat, at right angles to its length, and on the front end of the car. The screw-wheel of a ship, of course, is located at the stern, but the reverse is true of the dirigible balloon.

The blades of the wheel were set perpendicularly to their axis, which was itself as nearly horizontal as possible. The axis was fitted with a ball and socket, so that the propeller could be swung in any direction, and used as a rudder, somewhat after the manner of a Kunstadter screw-wheel\* of a mod-

\* This principle, which is undoubtedly the solution of the great problem of aërial navigation, as well as all the additions



ern ironclad, by which the vessel is turned around within its own length.

It is evident that this wheel could not be used precisely in the sense of a propeller; its function was principally to rarefy the air in front of the balloon, and drive it backward laterally along the car, so that the ship could make headway against the wind, or rather, be sucked toward the wind by the vacuum produced.

The motor had a power equal to 2,170 foot-pounds, driving the propeller, when at full speed, at a rate of 540 revolutions per minute, but ordinarily at a rate of 180 revolutions.

Mr. Pegassus disliked to drive his balloon against the wind, as the compression of the

to aëronautics, and the history of military aëronautics in this book, are entirely the inventions and work of the author.—  
THE EDITORS.



aërostat naturally drew upon his compressed gas. He preferred to explore the mysterious realms of the atmosphere, in search of air-currents moving in the direction which he desired to take.

However, he always kept electrical power in reserve, since by swinging the propeller upward its revolutions increased his speed upward, or better, perhaps, the buoyancy of the aërostat. The lifting capacity of the hydrogen gas of 11,000 foot-pounds was thus increased by the lifting capacity of the dynamo of 2,170 foot-pounds, making a total of 13,170 foot-pounds.

The Kunstadter screw-wheel of a man-of-war can be turned only right or left, which is sufficient for the steering of the ship, to wheel it around suddenly within its own length or quickly swerve it from a near ob-



stacle. But for the purposes of an air-ship Mr. Pegassus saw in the Kunstadter principle of a screw-wheel the solution of the most vexatious obstacles with which the dirigible balloon has been confronted. By application of this principle, an air-ship could be forced down or up, to right or left, in any direction whatsoever. He eagerly applied the ball and socket idea to the axis of the propeller of his own balloon, and the *Americus* obeyed his slightest wish.

The immense car, extending the entire length of the balloon, afforded all the space necessary for a laboratory, storage-room, small state-rooms, and a promenade. It was principally constructed of wicker-work, and all of its space was economically utilized. It has been stated that the lifting capacity of the balloon, without the aid of the propeller,



was 11,000 pounds. This was divided as follows :

Balloon with valves, 750 pounds ; suspension covering, 460 pounds ; lateral flexible rods, 225 pounds ; car, 660 pounds ; motor and machinery, 1,850 pounds ; stoppage apparatus (anchor and guy-rope), 330 pounds ; excursionists and instruments, 1,000 pounds ; weight of ballast, 2,000 pounds ; gas-storage cylinders, 1,000 pounds ; total, 8,275 pounds. Of course, in addition to these, he carried some hundreds of pounds of provisions, clothing, tools, liquors, tobacco, pet dog and cat, literature, furniture, and whatever else goes to make up the necessaries and luxuries of a modern bachelor's establishment. In so doing he would still have room and lifting capacity for a thousand pounds of passengers, or a milch cow and a horse.



The laboratory was devoted to the manufacture of electrical power. The Siemens machine was mounted in a small engine-room. The propeller was formed of two helicoidal blades of wood, covered with varnished silk, which were prevented from getting out of shape by the action of steel-wire stretchers.

The speed of the dirigible *Americus* in the absence of a moving air-current was equal to three miles per hour for each horse power of the dynamo. The *Americus* easily made thirty miles per hour on a perfectly still day. Its speed with the wind was equal to the velocity per hour of the wind plus thirty miles per hour with the propeller in full motion. Using a velocity of wind of twelve miles per hour as a unit, the *Americus* made one mile against it in three min-



utes. It would therefore make headway against a current of sixty miles per hour at the rate of one mile in fifteen minutes.

But, as has been stated, for safety and economy in sailing, Mr. Pegassus preferred not to use his dynamo ; utilizing natural currents without any expenditure of his own force, thereby saving it in case of accidents. His present predicament indicated the possible exertion of all his electric forces.

Another question solved by the proprietor of the *Americus* was in reference to the storage of compressed hydrogen gas aboard the car of the balloon, to make up for any exhaust by the valve or any natural compression in the aërostat. First was an apparatus for the manufacture of the gas located in sheds of the balloon-yard in New York. The gas, when manufactured, ascended into



a conduit, whence it made its exit ready for use, and was stored in steel cylinders. The steel cylinders were eight feet in length, five inches in diameter, and one-half inch in thickness, weighing sixty-five pounds each. Herein the gas was preserved without any loss at a pressure of 135 atmospheres. On each trip the *Americus* carried fifteen of these, weighing in all 975 pounds, and sufficient for a total inflation of 2,100 cubic feet. As the entire aërostat when empty contained a vacuum of 108,000 cubic feet, or a capacity for that many cubic feet of gas, it was ordinarily found that the loss of gas by compression and the valve during one trip seldom exceeded 1,000 cubic feet, and the stored gas was more than sufficient to make good the loss.

In the operation of inflation but one cyl-



inder would ordinarily be opened at a time, since the gas, in passing from 135 atmospheres to one atmosphere, would produce through its expansion an intense cold, and hence only one cylinder at a time would be discharged. Owing to the great length of the aërostat, the *Americus* was easily fed by six cylinders at once, each connected at regular intervals. In the balloon-yard there were kept constantly, for the inflation of the aërostat, 600 of these steel cylinders filled with compressed hydrogen gas, and sufficient to inflate the entire aërostat and store its car.

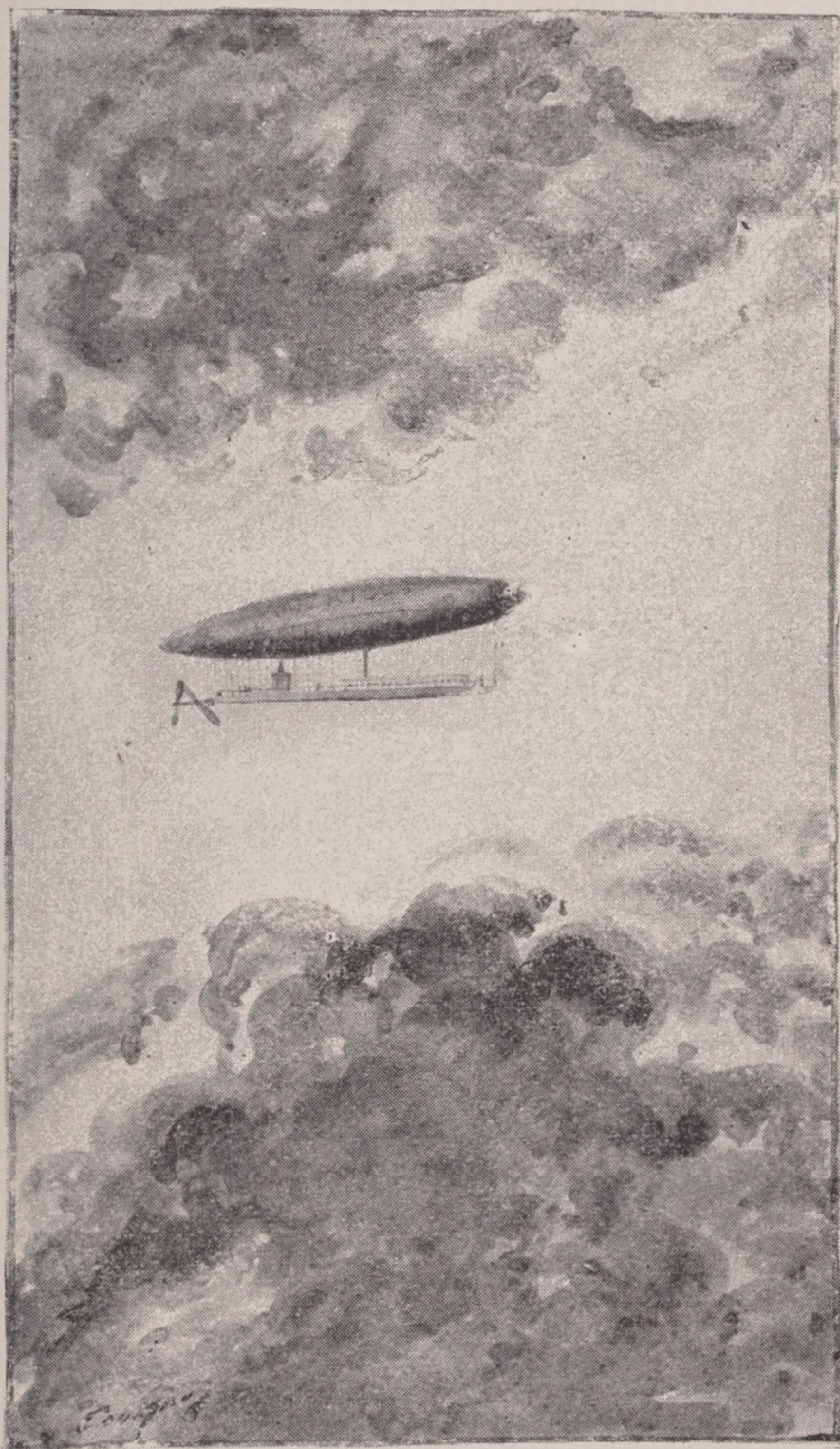
The *Americus* cost about \$171,000, a sum much less than the cost of a big steam yacht. The amount could be greatly reduced if a plant were in existence in this country for the regular manufacture of such powerful air-ships.



This description fairly covers the *Americus*, the great dirigible balloon belonging to Mr. Junius Pegassus, of New York, and operated by him purely as a matter of personal pleasure, responding to his natural inclination to a life of solitude which none of his friends could be persuaded to join and consequently molest him; nor could he be met on the way or interrupted or competed with. On his proud ship, or in his little state-room, he was actually monarch of all he surveyed. The aërial life had an intense charm for him. It accounted, as a taste, for the cynicism toward women which will be seen to have developed in him.

For once in his life Mr. Pegassus found himself in the air under conditions when he would rather have seen his ship safely in





AT THE PRESENT MOMENT, THE ENTIRE UPPER AND LOWER STRATA OF  
AIR SEEMED TO HAVE MORE OR LESS VIOLENT COMMOTIONS. —







its captivity in his yard. He had often been up before when the elements seemed too boisterous to descend comfortably. At such times he mounted high, kept to his state-room, enjoyed the contents of his locker, had his meals served in simple style, and awaited until the indications pointed to an easy descent. At the present moment, the entire upper and lower strata of air seemed to have more or less violent commotions.

His only plan seemed to be to sail westward, perhaps to the Rockies or beyond, where the conditions might be more peaceable. The upper westward current was favorable to this plan, and besides, it saved him exerting too much electrical force, that force which was doubtless destined to be drawn upon to its fullest extent to save the precious life now his guest. He had but



three men aboard besides himself. Being a night of dread and possibilities there was no chance for any one to sleep or rest.

One man was detailed to constantly shift the ballast (which was done by a mechanical contrivance of sliding-rods) to preserve the equilibrium of the ship; another (the captain) was required to watch the propeller and other gear, to report accidents; the third was the engineer, who looked after the valve, dynamo, and stored gas. Himself maintained the lookout, kept watch of the barograph, the pendulum showing the oscillations of the ship, or its careenings, tested the anemograph for varying velocities of the wind and gave orders, when necessary.

At ten o'clock Miss Douvre called him.



## CHAPTER IV.

### THE TWO QUASI-CYNICS MEET.

Mr. Pegassus entered the state-room, after carefully removing his oilskin coat and arranging his attire to appear as if he were anywhere except on board of a balloon. He considered that the air-ship would not require watching for some time, as she seemed to be sailing steadily at the base of the gale and answered her rudder propeller perfectly. He had but one duty—to minister to the lady and conceal from her the fact of her presence on his ship for all time, if possible.

“In hopes that you were sleeping and recuperating,” he said, “I have not disturbed



you. If there is anything you desire, pray let me get it for you."

"I have slept, but my nerves seem to have suffered a shock and it began to grow wearisome in here. I thought some one would answer my call, and perhaps share my loneliness until I can again sleep."

"Wait a moment and I will get you something to soothe your nerves."

The man went to the locker and returned with a bottle of old port wine — a good blood-maker, which, with madeira, are probably the only blood-making wines—and such dainties to eat as he had in store. After taking some of the wine she revived sufficiently to sit erect and nibble the dainties.

"I haven't recovered sufficiently to care to investigate the circumstances which brought us together or what is to become of me.



Still, I would like to ask you some inoffensive questions. At least, the occupation will serve to tire me so I can sleep again."

"You are very considerate, Miss Douvre, to insist that the questions will tire you rather than the answers." The man laughed pleasantly and contagiously, as she joined in with him.

"Might I inquire," she queried, "if you have kidnapped me and shut me in this fairy palace for some purpose unknown to the defendant?" Again she laughed pleasantly.

"You have nearly surmised the case, though I assure you the kidnapping was entirely unconscious on my part."

"I can imagine the unconsciousness of it in you. You are something of a cynic, at least a quasi-cynic.



“And you?”

“Well, we each are quasi-cynics, then, that is, in the modern acceptation of the term, which has come to mean, how no linguist can explain, one averse to the opposite sex, or averse to a nearer relationship than an interchange of politeness and courtesy. But enough! I am sure neither of us is surly on the subject, or a boor. As a matter of fact, I think cynicism is more on the surface than in the heart. Might I inquire where I am?”

The man thought a moment. He had already planned a lie, but he lacked moral courage to execute it. “You are in a little studio or private room of the superintendent of the shepherd’s barns \* in Central Park.”

\* The shepherd’s barns of Central Park comprise a commodious and beautiful structure of pressed brick in which are living quarters.—EDS.



"I have not heard so much as the bleat of a sheep, but have felt a swaying motion at times as of a ship at sea."

"The sheep are all asleep, and if there was so much as a bleat abroad, the great storm would drown it." Mutual smiles.

"How did I happen to get into the shepherd's quarters?"

"There was no other place to take you."

"Why was I not taken home?"

"There was no vehicle in which to take you, on account of the worst storm ever experienced in the metropolis. Besides, when discovered you were insensible, and unknown to those who immediately surrounded you, and I did not know how dangerously you might be hurt. I placed you in here awaiting an opportunity to get you safely home without danger or annoyance or gossip."



“That is to say that there was an accident to my horse and you rescued me. Can you inform me as to the fate of his lordship?”

“I did not see him.”

“I hope he is safe. Pardon these queries. I am not ungrateful, and think the fact will develop in good time. I am one in a predicament that seems so mysterious that I rather enjoy picking at it, as it were.”

“I am glad to answer such questions as lie within my power, Miss Douvre, but I hope you will not exert yourself too much.”

The man was courtly, considerate, and pleasing. She did not desire him to leave at present, not until the unfathomable mystery of the whole thing could be solved, and while she was so wide awake. “And all the time I have slept here you have remained to watch over me?” she ventured.



“Such has been my pleasure.”

“There are some elements in this affair which I appreciate. Your courtesy resolves itself into the principal. It is sometimes well to be philosophical, even stoical at times. Suppose we admit for the present that I am here and must make the best of it, even to a spirit of sincere thankfulness that nothing worse has befallen me. Would you mind entertaining me?”

“It would be a great pleasure if I could be entertaining to you.”

“We have known each other for several years, Mr. Pegassus, at least since the very first night I made my *début* in society. You were at our home on that night for a short time. You never seem to remain long at any entertainment you favor with your presence. You are a mystery to our sex and a



wonder to your own. Pardon me for so plainly stating the proposition. As you are to entertain me, would you mind unravelling the mystery ? ”

The man enjoyed the novel position in which he found himself placed. He was intensely pleased, because he knew that she was wholly oblivious, at least for the present, and perhaps for all time, to her whereabouts and dangers. “I was not aware, Miss Douvre, that my life was of so much interest to so many people. I shall be happy to disentangle the snarls in it or demonstrate the proposition, as you put it. Where shall we begin ? ”

“Your principal enjoyment seems to be aëronauting. How came you to select such a pastime ? ”

“It is difficult to say. I have often spec-



ulated on the subject. Also, why some men take to the law, others to medicine, some to the violin, or invention, or science, etc. If I say that it is because water seeks its level, you will think me a fatalist. Still, there can be no doubt that every individual finds his or her level in this world, and that, after all, is destiny. One is what he is, and could evidently be nothing else. Inheritance has something to do with it, though not in my case. There were no aëronauts among my ancestry; the thing had birth in my own brain, and, for the want of something more amusing, perhaps, I developed the idea. I believe that motive underlies all the efforts of the human mind. It may be that I had a higher motive than mere pleasure. I sometimes try to credit myself with the desire to perfect an unperfected science. I



had a large fortune absolutely left me, so large that it seems impossible to decrease it by my most persistent efforts. I never took kindly to a life in the clubs altogether, the mere idleness of a man of leisure. I wanted to do something which would not take the bread out of any other mouth. Had I gone into law or medicine or otherwise, and succeeded, I would have deprived someone else more deserving and needy, perhaps, of all I achieved. I try never to do anything which someone else can do and earn something by it. I wasn't adapted to enter any business that was agreeable to me. I never found anything in society, outside of the grand opera, that particularly interested me. In college my mind ran to mathematics and the applied sciences rather than languages. I found the chemical laboratory more agree-



able than the campus. While in Paris I met Captain Renard, Captain Krebs, Gaston Tissandier, and Gabriel Yon, the great military aëronauts of modern times. I saw their wonderful air-ships, saw Renard and Krebs make their ascension from the wood of Meudon, and steer their cigar-shaped balloon against the wind, returning to the very spot from which they started, perhaps the only instance of the kind. Tissandier revealed to me the secret of his electric dynamos, and Yon related to me the secret of the proposed enormous balloon of one hundred and ninety-five feet in length, which he was to construct for the Russian Government. I got intensely interested in the subject merely by seeing the ascension of Renard and Krebs. I said to myself, 'I will go home and build a balloon in my own country



which shall surpass the efforts of these foreigners, even if they are backed by the continental governments.'

"It was American inventive genius combined with English capital that boosted the science of aëronautics, anyway. I concluded to erect a factory on my own estate which should take the bread from no man's mouth, but open a new species of occupation for a great many people, besides increasing activity in many manufacturing circles. It has never been my intention to construct balloons for sale, and, therefore, I have not interfered with the custom of any manufacturer. As a matter of fact, there is no manufactory in the United States which could build balloons on the scale of the *Americus*. I visited the factory of Mr. H. Lachambre, at Vaugirard, where eight thou-





I VISITED THE FACTORY OF MR. H. LACHAMBRE, AT VAUGIRARD.







sand balloons are annually manufactured. After familiarizing myself with the principles of construction, I made arrangements to have a few skilled American artisans coached at Lachambre's shops. I next studied the various methods of manufacture of hydrogen gas, finally adopting somewhat that of Mr. Gabriel Yon, after an inspection of his works near the Champ-de-Mars. My dynamo, which furnishes power for my propeller and steering-gear, I modelled somewhat after Tissandier's as improved by Captain M. Renard, at the French Military School of Aërostatics.

“Although Renard abolished the dynamo as adding weight for the aërostat to carry, and substituted stored electricity, I have held to my own idea of a dynamo, and constructed a balloon sufficiently large to



carry it in safety. I had a considerable timidity when I first made ascensions, and contented myself with sailing near the earth on fair days. Gradually I became accustomed to the air-ship, and its seeming perfect safety and dirigibility, until now the great altitudes often afford to me the only solitudes for which I crave."

"I have been intensely interested in your account of your taste in this direction, Mr. Pegassus, and shall no longer wonder at your so-called eccentricity. But why do you prefer solitude to the society of mankind?"

"Again you ask me a question which borders upon the psychological. It may be because I have regarded myself as a man without an affinity in either sex. In college I was without a chum. In life I have been without a wife. In the club I have sat at



the tables with the men, staring at them while they drank and jested, without seeing or hearing them. You ought not to thrust such problems on one impromptu. I am a student, but not of myself, and on the spur of the moment cannot analyze myself for you. If you had not asked me to entertain you under circumstances which not only demand but make it my pleasure, I should turn the tables on you and ask if you are following the usual method of feminine flattery of the vanity of man by asking questions concerning himself."

"No, I am intensely interested. There would be no particular object in merely flattering a man who, like you, is self-unconscious; such men cannot appreciate the effort, and the fact should be their pride, if such can be persuaded to have pride. Tell



me more concerning the balloon, its origin, its destiny."

"The first ascent in a free balloon you will not find described either in the dictionaries or the encyclopædias. It was made by Pilatre de Rosier and the Marquis of Arlandes, at the Muette Garden, November 21, 1783. The only account of the ascent is to be found in an unpublished letter by Benjamin Franklin. The aërostat was a beautiful globe very fancifully decorated. The method of sailing it is described in Franklin's letter. The balloon had an open appendage, in the centre of which was fixed a sort of lattice-work basket, in which small faggots and bundles of straw were lighted to produce gas for the inflation. The air, being rarefied in passing through the flames, inflated and filled the balloon. The persons who





THE ONLY ACCOUNT OF THE ASCENT IS TO BE FOUND IN AN UNPUBLISHED  
LETTER BY BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.







entered the osier gallery, attached outside near the appendage, each had in front of him an aperture that allowed him to throw bundles of straw into the fireplace in order to keep up the fire and the balloon full of gas. When the flames diminished, the rarefied air cooled and condensed, and the balloon descended. But all the aëronauts had to do to rise again was to feed the flames. That, I believe, covers the account of the first free ascent in a balloon. Previous to that time, men seem to have been content to send up sheep. As to the first balloon ever invented, it would be impossible to say, as the Chinese come in with their regular plea of having been a thousand years ahead of history."

"But the destiny of the balloon?"

"All we know of destiny, I fear, is already



history. We can say what is must be, perhaps, but how can we say what is to be? Aërostation has made some considerable progress during the last decade. I will refrain from mentioning my own part in it, in hope that some day you may be induced to see my *Americus* and compare it with what I may tell you of the work of others. France first introduced balloons into warfare, during the revolution, but those were captive balloons. France claims still to be ahead of the other nations in military aëronautics. Italy, when at war with Abyssinia, sent the French aëronautic commander, Gabriel Yon, with transportable balloons to the seat of activity. He transported the airships and the gas in storage cylinders for their inflation. Each balloon was made of silk, and so pliable as to fit into its car of





ITALY, . . . SENT THE FRENCH AÉRONAUTIC COMMANDER, GABRIEL YON, WITH TRANSPORTABLE BALLOONS TO THE SEAT OF ACTIVITY.







but thirty-five cubic feet capacity. The whole was contained in a compartment in a hind carriage of a vehicle, the front part of which was occupied by a windlass. Each carriage devoted to a balloon was built low, to withstand the jolting, and was drawn by two horses.

“At Massowah Mr. Yon found a country not adapted to his balloon carriages, and was obliged to substitute the camel for the horses. Around the drum of the windlass winds a cable, the extremity of which was affixed to a trapeze that surrounded each car. Within the cable, composed of several strands, were two telephone wires, not exactly in the centre, but a little to one side, in order that, in case of breakage, the point where the accident occurred could be ascertained at once. By this means captive



balloons were in constant communication with those who remained below, who paid out or drew in the cable at will, and received telephonic messages concerning the movements of the enemy. It took ten men to do the manœuvring.

“I will not trouble you with an account of balloons not captive in war, unless you desire it, but will speak of other countries than France. Italy and Russia adopted war balloons some time ago. The Czar is frequently a spectator at the manœuvres of military aëronauts. The first dirigible airship secured by Russia was ordered from Mr. Yon, of France. England has an aëronautic station at Chatham, where balloons are constructed under the direction of army officers. While the German government keeps abreast of military aëronautics and



is in the possession of air-ships, her experiments are directed mainly to methods of attack and destruction of both captive and free balloons. Its first invention of artillery apparatus for throwing projectiles to a great height was immediately appropriated, as far as possible, by its jealous neighbors. Holland, Belgium, Austria, and Denmark are not so much experimenters as purchasers of all aëronautic apparatus.

“The United States is the only nation of consequence which has paid no particular attention to the subject. I mean our war department. But we Americans are notorious for making no advances in anything military. Other governments purchase the results of our inventive genius, as for instance the case of the Hotchkiss and Gatling guns. We offer no rewards for ad-

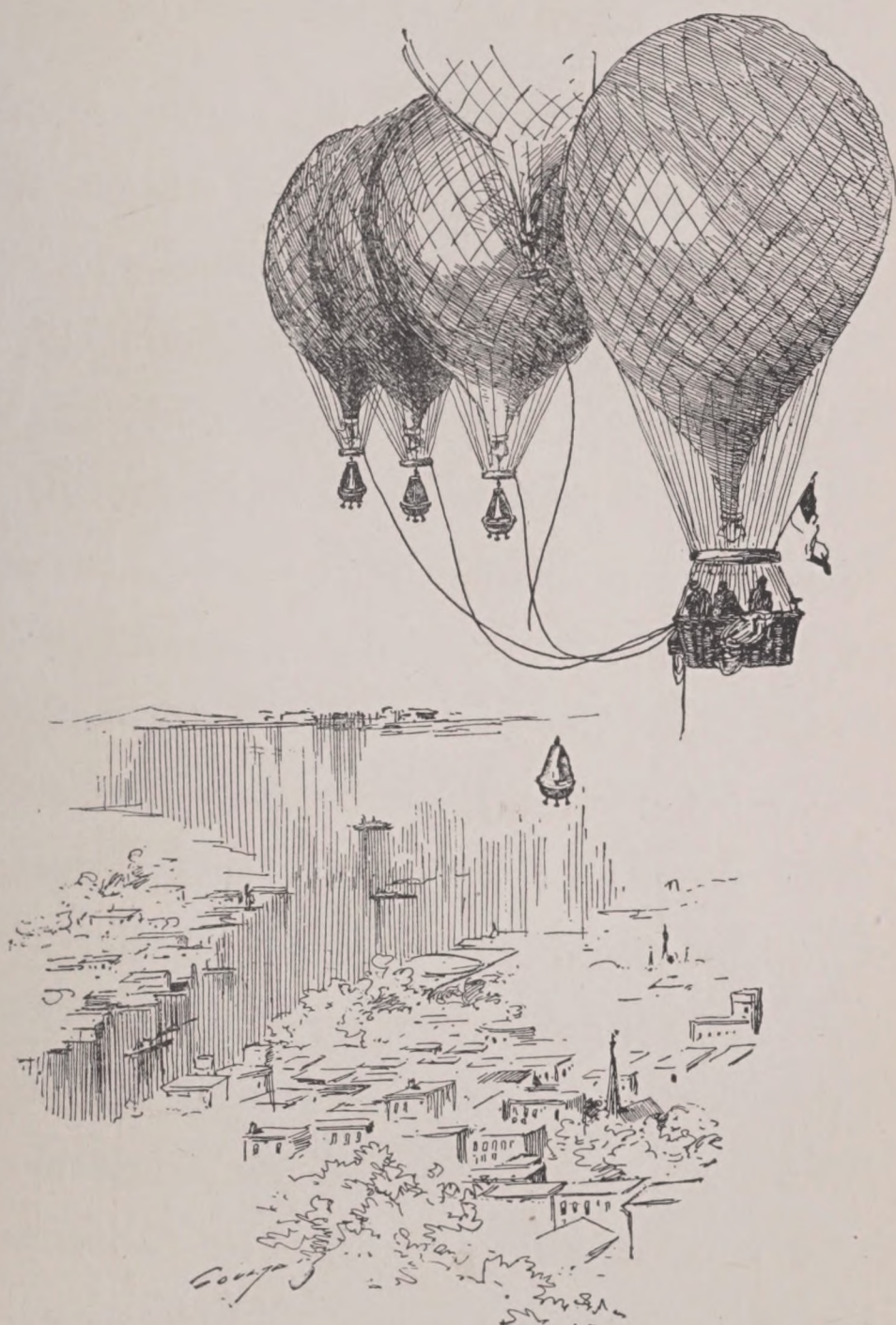


vanced inventions, will give no appropriations to purchase them, and of course our inventors are driven across the water."

"I should like to hear about the free balloons in warfare you mentioned."

"Two Austrian brothers, artillery officers, by the name of Uchatius, were the first to make practical use of aërial torpedoes. They experimented near Vienna, and made use of their system at the siege of Venice, in 1849. In 1882 the German engineer, George Rodeck, began to pay especial attention to the construction of air-torpedoes. Then there is the Gower system, of France, and the dynamite balloon of America, invented by General Thayer. Rodeck divided his system into two classes. The electric torpedo balloons he provided with clockwork detachers. The balloons are started in the





IMAGINE A COLLECTION OF BALLOONS, A LARGE ONE AND A NUMBER OF SMALLER ONES, CONNECTED WITH EACH OTHER, SAILING IN A GROUP, AND YOU HAVE AN IDEA OF TORPEDO AÉRONAUTICS IN SOME FUTURE WAR.







direction of the undercurrent of air from a point beyond the reach of the enemy's fire.

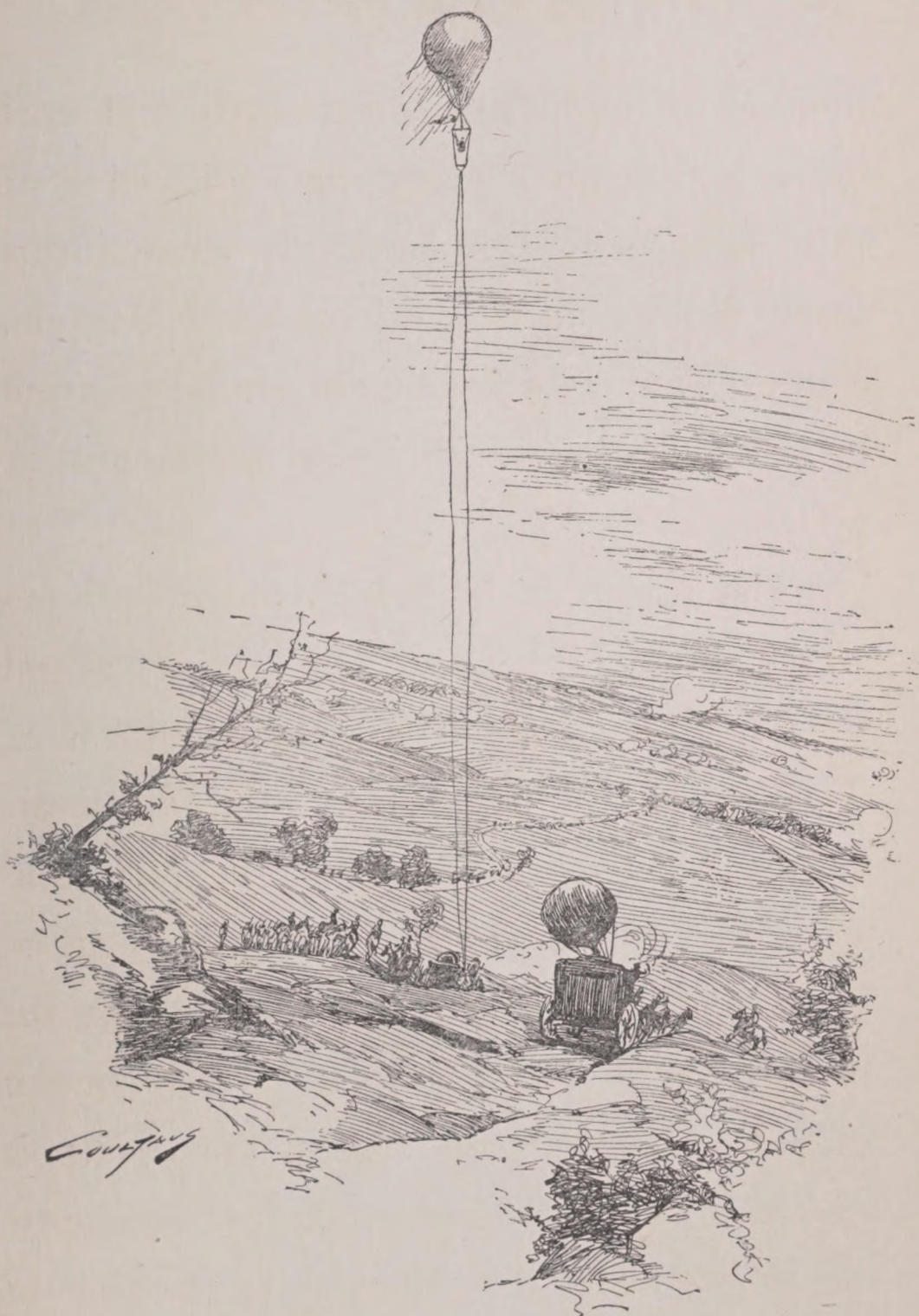
“The electric balloon column consists of the principal air-ship, with a capacity of about 50,000 cubic feet, and the several torpedo balloons, of a capacity of some 20,000 cubic feet each. The operators are carried on the passenger-ship. To the network of each torpedo balloon there is attached a square box, in which the detached device for the metallic bomb-shaped torpedo is placed. Each torpedo contains from 110 to 165 pounds of dynamite or gun-cotton. The detaching apparatus by which the explosives are dropped on the heads of the hapless victims, in all the torpedo balloons, is connected with an electric battery located in the basket of the principal balloon. Imagine a collection of balloons, a large one and a



number of smaller ones, connected with each other, sailing in a group, and you have an idea of torpedo aëronautics in some future war. Before starting, all the lesser balloons containing the torpedoes are placed in front of the operating air-ship, and all mount together.

“The invention by which these balloons are kept together at the same height should be credited to Dr. Meossel, of Kiel. As soon as the group has arrived at the desired place over the enemy, the torpedoes are detached, at intervals or all together, by means of an electric current from the battery on the main balloon. When one of these torpedoes alights amidst the enemy, it explodes and throws one hundred dynamite cartridges in all directions. At the time of the detachment, the balloon which carried





OUT OF EIGHTEEN SHOTS, ELEVEN TOOK EFFECT ON A BALLOON STATIONED AT A HEIGHT OF 1,312 FEET, BUT NOT ONE HARMED THE CAPTIVE AT AN ALTITUDE OF 1,624 FEET.







the torpedo is also released. In fact, the electric action which detaches the torpedo, releases the carrying balloon and opens its valve, so that it sinks gradually without exploding. If it falls within lines it can again be used; if not, the enemy has it for what it is worth.

“It may interest you to know precisely to what danger this group of balloons is exposed by the enemy. I have already stated that the German experiments were mainly in the direction of destroying military balloons by artillery practice and the firing of projectiles to a great height. In this practice, captive balloons were stationed at various altitudes. Out of eighteen shots, eleven took effect on a balloon stationed at a height of 1,312 feet, but not one harmed the captive at an altitude of 1,624 feet.



Mr. Rodeck consequently operates his aërial torpedoes from an altitude above the enemy of 3,280 feet, to avoid even chance shots.

“Of course, there are conditions of atmosphere inimical to the operation of torpedo balloons, such as prevail to-night, for instance, so the military aëronaut must have, unless his main balloon is as safe and directive as my *Americus*, favorable air-currents. Although the wind cannot be expected to continue the same during all the time occupied by the manœuvres, still experience has shown that in normal weather there is a certain uniformity in air-currents, especially in regions not far above the earth. Aëronauts can judge of the weather by many indications known to sailors, and besides, there have been many instruments invented for



ascertaining the direction of upper air-currents."

"I am very curious to know upon what principle a balloon is steered."

"What we term inherent velocity, given to a balloon by means of propelling machinery, will account for the fact of its being steered. Without such power of motion there could be no steering. It has been said that anybody can steer a balloon in the direction of the wind, and that no one can steer it in a calm. The fact is that a balloon, *per se*, knows nothing about the wind and is always in a calm. When a balloon comes to be propelled by some internal motor, it encounters atmospheric resistance, solely due to its own motion. Having motion of its own, it can then be steered.

"While it is thus travelling in the region



of the air, it is subject to all the movements of the atmosphere, and its geographical course is a combination of its own motion and that of the current in which it travels. If a dead calm prevails, then the propelled balloon takes its course over the earth in exact accordance with its own inherent speed and direction. It is made to move against the wind because its propeller, which is placed at the front end of the aërostat, creates a vacuum when in motion which sucks the air-ship forward."

"You hesitate; are you at the end of the chapter, as it were?"

"I am, in general. I think I have covered the points of progress in aëronautics. There only remains a detailed description of my own ship, the *Americus*, which can best be described some day when we can go aboard



of her, presumably in the yards where she cannot fly away with you. Do you know you surprise me very much?"

"Why?"

"I never expected to have the honor of a listener in the realms of fashion. Fashionable girls are usually taken up with other matters of more interest to them."

"You are as bad as the club men, who think girls in our circles have no brains. Men are not acute observers, else they would note that intellectual gentlemen are often most sought after by our sex. We like brainless men to dance with, and sometimes, I fear, to flirt with, but we only respect men of intellect. I assure you, that much as I should prefer to be in my own drawing-room to listen to you, I would rather be here, or even in a more preposterous position,



than not to have heard all that has fallen from your lips. I do not intend to flatter you, but I like a masterful man, one who knows what he is talking about. You are evidently thoroughly informed on this subject. You have the highest motives for your seeming eccentricity, but which, after all, is a great science in which it is a matter of pride to be interested and thoroughly informed. However you may be regarded in the world of aristocracy, you at least command its respect, as you must the admiration of the scientific and military world."

The young lady reclined wearily. "I think I will sleep again," she murmured.

And she slept, and the man went out on deck with a new fire raging in his breast.





MR. PEGASSUS.







## CHAPTER V.

### THE REVERY OF MR. JUNIUS PEGASSUS.

Some men are born "lucky," some acquire "luck," and others have "luck" thrust upon them; at least, so I should say, if I believed either in what is termed "luck" or "ill-luck." It is not customary for men of scientific bent of mind to consider such local terms as "luck." Mr. Pegassus was of a decidedly scientific turn of mind. Though he had never been brought face to face with the term "luck" in all his wealthy life before this time, on this momentous night he admitted that "luck" had been thrust upon him. To him, Miss Douvre answered to the term "luck." He had not asked for her;



he had not dreamed of her; he had never before desired her; she had been thrust upon him, and he rather liked it. He had always been as fond of Miss Douvre, at least, as he had been of any other daughter of the 400. Having had her in his arms, he liked her much better. But having actually discovered that she was possessed of an intellect sufficient to comprehend and admire aëronautics, he began to adore her.

The great air-ship was poising at an altitude of eleven thousand feet, where she had been held for some time by the captain, who thought it better to stand still than further tempt the cyclone above and the hurricane beneath. Mr. Pegassus had nothing to do but to think, so he lighted a cigar and thought. He ought to have slept, but orders had been given that no man should



close his eyes on board, and he proposed to obey orders, if even he himself gave them.

Precisely what Mr. Pegassus thought about was precisely what any honorable man in his situation would have thought about. His mind was accustomed to analyze, and there was no process by which it could be satisfied save through analysis. It was natural that, in going from the presence of a woman who had not only pleased him, but had inspired him, he should take down from the dusty shelves in his heart all the cruel, cynical theories against women he possessed, and hold them up for comparison and analysis before the mirror of those brown eyes closed in sleep in his state-room.

"Love," like "luck," had always seemed to him to be a mere local term such as "time," "space," and "straight line," words



coined for mere convenience but without meaning, reason, or demonstration. The things we call space and time having neither conceivable beginnings nor conceivable ends, can only be used as local terms for the convenience of people, and hence can have no existence. We speak of a straight line, but no one was ever able to construct one except in imagination, and hence it is a local term having no existence in fact. He had naturally reasoned, "How, then, can there be any such thing as love?"

At many fashionable weddings he had said to himself, "Love is an hallucination, at best, a mental illusion. For instance, place two young people together on a farm or other isolated place where they come in contact with no other young people, and ere long they fall in 'love.' Place the same



pair in a crowded community with many other young companions, and they will be sufficed with a mere acquaintance."

"Again," he had assumed, "given a girl with two lovers to whom she is equally attached, and when forced to choose she will take the one most indifferent to her, in hopes of her ultimate subjection of him. Without exception—and exceptions in mathematics, natural science, and in fact everything, prove the rule—love is based on policy of some kind. Few instances of real soul affinity have ever been known outside of fiction. Fiction is founded on this very proposition; it is the natural outcome of the human longing for the impossible. The novelist is aware that the unknown quantity termed 'glamour' is as much an hereditary trait of all youth as is conceit and freshness. There-



fore, said novelist plays on this string for the sake of fame, a constituency, bread, and a laudable desire to force his opinions on the susceptible world."

It will be seen that Mr. Pegassus was quite as hard on the authors of fiction as upon the devotees of love. It is quite remarkable how many men in modern times fully agree with whatever he might say against the time-honored institution called love. He continued to confess his past thought. "Every farm-boy in a community is ambitious to marry the girl whose father has the largest farm. Every girl in that community, including the heiress in question, desires to catch the young man whose father is the local magnate. The same policy in 'love' continues up to the highest grades of society. It is caused by the fact that in-





HE DROPPED THE STUB OF HIS CIGAR OVER THE RAIL.







instinct teaches every boy and girl to simulate a love for that one personage of the opposite sex who dresses best, is supposed to have the wealthiest parents, and who spreads the largest external appearances. Take the typical case of the farm heiress. The man who fires her imagination most by the best address, the one best fitted to survive, as it were, secures her in time, and the remaining but disappointed youth of the community, out of pique, mate as best they can."

Mr. Pegassus glanced uneasily at the state-room as his thought reverted to his time-honored beliefs, as if he feared the lady were looking at his meditations. He dropped the stub of his cigar over the rail—perhaps to strike and kill by its momentum some hapless citizen a mile below—and lighted another.



This country should make and enforce some laws in reference to aëronauts throwing refuse overboard.

“Surely,” he thought, “I ought to know how it is in the metropolis. Marriages there are based upon the supposed benefits to be derived by alliance, such as wealth, political or social prestige, title, combination of fortunes, etc. As a mere matter of form, the man is allowed to tell the girl he loves her and indulge in a few sentimental premarital hours, but not until after the parents or guardians have consulted and fixed the settlements. Any attempt on the part of the youth to court independently or marry clandestinely is met by a storm of opposition by the people on both sides, or the relatives on the side least benefited, because these people know by actual experience that love has



no place in married life, is a chimera, a sentimental glamour, a mistaken conception, a mental illusion not capable of much endurance after the ceremony."

Again Mr. Pegassus glanced uneasily toward the state-room, and allowed that perhaps experiment would utterly demolish this view. But he had courage and proceeded to resurrect his idols. "Some temperaments are such that, recognizing the flight of love from the window, the united pair mutually agree to live out the glamour, be good citizens for the sake of their offspring, and get as much happiness—whatever that indefinable, alleged thing is—as possible. Such couples are the real bulwarks of the commonwealth. That must be admitted. But as a matter of statistics, some forty per cent. of American marriages



go to the divorce court, forty more are made up of bitter inter-domestic strife, and the remaining twenty per cent. of married people live amicably together by tacit consent, believing they have done as well as possible for mere human beings to do. In France, divorce is more rare because the father usually recognizes only his first-born child. In England, particularly among the nobility, scandal, intrigue, and disreputed households are the rule. Among the southern European nations the ferocity of passion, the dagger, the stiletto, and family clans make attempted divorce, desertion, or unfaithfulness dangerous. The further north one travels, the less family separation is observable, but also the more ignorance and neglect of the bath-tub, so that married life is accepted complacently as something which must be."



Mr. Pegassus had kept a shamefaced glance toward the state-room for some time, as if expecting the lady to come forth in wrath and demand to be rid of his presence. He was a brave man, and he continued to make his confessions, even if he had to pay the penalty then and there. He conceived that he must take all these thoughts out of his mind for inspection and cast them overboard. "The male sex is fairly well versed in the uses of the term 'love.' The discreet man, he who studies the sex well, will play it diplomatically and win where he chooses. The female studies the same word for different effects. To her, love means the surrender on her part of not very much, and the conquest of all she values most, whether it be society and the ability to maintain a place, or mere wealth as something to boast



over and display, or merely a husband to support her. The latter is the plea of the female of the masses—someone to support her. So, love is a mere foot-ball, a term which means differently to every living being. It has its humorous sides like everything else. Probably the maddest woman in the world is she who, having rejected a man in order to play with him as a cat would a feather, awaits in vain to see him make a scene, or turn pale, or lose his appetite, or go away in despair or rage, or commit suicide, or mention the subject, or propose a second time. The rejected man who knows the female character, particularly if he has been an apparently favored suitor, can get all the vengeance he desires by failing to mention the subject of matrimony a second time to the lady.”



Mr. Pegassus was certain he knew all about the feminine character. This was what he professed to know: "Of the two sexes, woman is the more peculiar creature. If she insults a man she expects him to apologize. Her ten thousand caprices—mere animal traits, when dissected—she expects him to sympathize with and endure with patience and long suffering. She hesitates at nothing, not even her personal sacrifice, to accomplish an end, usually not worth having. Her whole life and its every action are governed by motives and her means are to an end. Since the very dawn of history, the wife has utilized a good dinner, some little gift, or an extra show of affability previous to asking for a new dress or bonnet. In fashionable circles, the wife procures whatever she desires, and peace in the family, by



professing not to know her husband's life outside the home. Strange to say, the intellectual woman, particularly the college graduate, is not a success in the matrimonial market. She seems to unsex herself the moment she acquires a sheepskin. This is the case because education has taught her how low down in the scale are her mere inherited animal traits of character.

“Many of these traits were inherited from the lower orders, and cultivated to something like perfection by natural selection through the entire age of man. Her method of adorning herself so as to attract attention is practised by all the lower species. She hasn't a vanity or whim, which isn't duplicated in the hennery, forest, and pasture. The college woman comes to know this so thoroughly that she often lays aside, in dis-



gust, the deceits of her sex ; and men, unaccustomed to so high a variety of woman, in general pass her by and go lower down in the scale of intellect, passions, and womanisms. The age may change. Men may yet come to know that the safety of the family and the republic lies in marriage with these safe, college-educated, well-equipoised women."

Mr. Pegassus confessed that he had been no quasi cynic, as Miss Douvre had said, but one in deed and fact. His experiences of the night cried out against such harsh opinions, however true they might seem to a cold scientific mind which observed phases of life without a scintilla of passion, but from the one standpoint of passing data. Of a sudden, he arrived at the conclusion that it was not only indiscreet, usually, to tell the truth, but to see it as well. He was the very type



of man to take advanced views on the sex question, but unlike leisure club men, he never undertook to accuse women of vices. For college-bred women he had somehow come to entertain the highest respect, except in cases where they became rampant woman's rights advocates, which, he insisted, was the most distressing of all doctrines. He had no objections to her taking up law, or medicine, where he conceded she was sorely needed to minister properly to her own sex. Woman's rights, he was sure, was a retrograde movement. He argued thus:

“Woman's rights, supposed to be progressive, is really a return to barbarianism, since in all barbaric tribes woman has her ‘rights’ and does all the hard work, slaves for the idle brave. One would suppose that in nature degeneration is impossible, because being



a world governed on the principles of evolution, only progress is possible. Still, the bear degenerated from the dog. So, the success of woman's rights would mean the ultimate relief for man from all toil, while the female degenerated to a mere pack-horse."

The stub of the second cigar also fell over the rail, and perhaps killed some lone quadruped standing in a fence corner with back to the storm. The reverie was ended and the aëronaut considered that, in taking all these thoughts from his mind almost in the presence of a representative of the sex, and throwing them away, he had atoned and become purged, since he promised not to resume them again on any account. On the whole, he rather hoped that they would fall on the earth, where some woman of good sense might pick them up, separate the true



from the false, admit that men are ever engaged in thinking such things for which the sex is partially to blame, and somehow restore the good old days of respect and chivalry between the sexes.

Mr. Pegassus had a deeply intellectual face. He was a man of stout, firm build, not past thirty-four years in age. He was somewhat above the medium height, and while not in the least red-haired, he was possessed of a pair of reddish sideburns that well became his face. He had those deep, gray-blue eyes and large chiselled nose, together with the straight, firm mouth which is somewhat typical of the New England scholar. That he was a scholar, every line of his features showed. He also had the apparent solidity of a man whom none of us wish to have strike out in our direction. He had



the scholar's way of working his under-lip when he spoke, and showing the under-row of teeth by which means he enunciated with perfect clearness. Nearly all men of his type are handsome. While admired by women, they are also feared.

The average woman does not take kindly to a handsome man. Her own looks are her special vanity, and she fears to lose some attention if placed alongside such a man. This should explain the multiplicity of marriages between very beautiful women and purely ugly men. The contrast is all to the enhancement of the woman's beauty and against the beast. Certainly, Mr. Pegasus was the last of mankind to whom a woman of fashion would be expected to take kindly matrimonially. In this respect, however, the gentleman began hoping he



had been mistaken. In fact he felt encouraged. He was both rich and, he believed, thoroughly respectable.

Suddenly an idea possessed him. He sprang to his feet. Suppose he should get Miss Douvre into her home before daylight. Would not that stop all scandal and save her name from being hawked in the papers? Neither of them knew what was taking place in New York City, but the chances were that his lordship, if he had a spark of manhood, would not tell the lady's name until compelled to do so by her absence. Certainly, Mr. Douvre was not a man to reveal an escapade of his own daughter. If she could be got into the house before dawn, no one could ever say she had been carried away captive by a balloon, not even she herself.





MY LORD HECTOR.







## CHAPTER VI.

### MY LORD HECTOR.

The Earl of Bathgate, or Lord Jasper Hector, paced the street in front of the Douvre mansion nearly all the night. There was no ascertaining the whereabouts of Miss Douvre. The servants were discreet and not subject to bribes, particularly where their mistress was concerned. His lordship considered his position from its several standpoints, and saw but one fate staring him in the face. He had practically failed to capture the heiress, and it was certain that his financial backer would no longer advance funds. The police were certain to arrest him in the morning, whether Miss Douvre



returned or not. Even if she were safe, he could not escape. It would sacrifice whatever honor remained to him to reveal the lady's name in any case. There was but one fact before the police—a lady who had been riding with his lordship had suddenly disappeared, leaving no trace of herself except a horse frightfully mangled.

Should Miss Douvre appear in the flesh on the following morning, she could not be mentioned as the person concerned without bringing her name into newspaper notoriety all over the world, and becoming the common subject of gossip of all classes. If she were dead, she must have been carried away by a meteor, of which fact there could be no proof or extenuating circumstances toward him. Her father could never be convinced of his innocence.



Dead or alive, he was the real victim of the disaster; he was the real object whose name would suffer; to the police the woman would always be dead. There was but one thing to do. It should never be said of him that he had been confined in a cell for murder. It should never be said of him that he had been backed by a broker who had deserted him. There was one way out of the whole affair, by which neither he nor an inoffensive lady should be compromised. He went over the whole matter to his satisfaction.

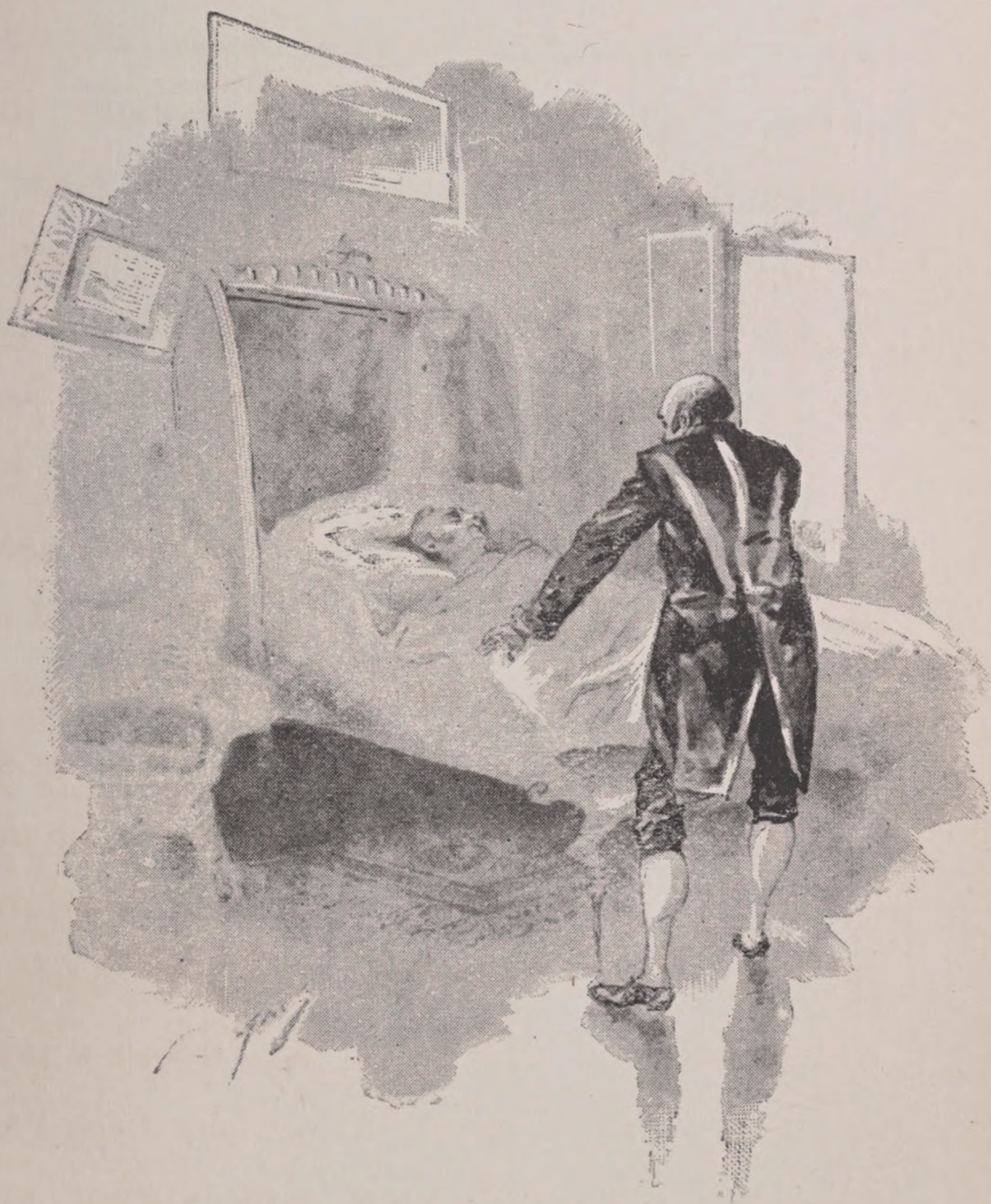
At three o'clock in the morning he returned to his apartment. He left everything in the room precisely as if he were expecting to go on as usual. He then arranged himself for retiring. Taking a small vial, he swallowed its contents. Then he opened



the heavy folding bed, got inside the blankets securely, and lay as if in sleep. As the effects of the poison began to exhaust his last strength, he managed to close the bed.

The next day a servant entered the rooms of my Lord Hector. He saw his lordship's clothes in their place, and naturally supposed that the noble was still asleep. He turned his face toward the bed, and was surprised to find it standing upright against the wall as if it had not been opened. Surely his lordship must be asleep somewhere in the room, as his clothes were in place. Why was not the bed let down as it should be, if his lordship were asleep? The servant, with a queer sensation which the psychologist may explain, slowly advanced to the bed, cautiously he touched the heavy spring and gently pulled it down. There, fast in sleep,





THERE FAST IN SLEEP, BUT IN THE SLEEP OF DEATH, LAY HIS LORDSHIP.







but in the sleep of death, lay his lordship,  
but on his face was a bitter, ironical smile.

“Strangled!” gasped the faithful servant,  
falling on his knees and violently weeping.



## CHAPTER VII.

### MR. PEGASSUS HAS A SURPRISE.

Miss Douvre was a college-bred woman. None but that type, perhaps, could be expected to take an Earl by the scruff of his neck, as it were, while she told him the exact truth about himself and her intentions. Only her type of mind could rise above the intricate network of feminine vanities and disclose the emptiness of a mere title to a broken-down antiquary, and dismiss the temptation.

There is nothing singular in a daughter of the 1,400 being a college graduate. In this select circle are quite as many curiosities as in any other. These daughters in some re-



spects are like other girls. They sometimes go on the stage, or in amateur theatricals or circus, show a consummate ability to do pretty much what other mortals do. In fact, the daughter of the 1,400 differs from the daughter of the 300,000 \* very largely in externals, such as surroundings, dress, opportunities, etc.

The very fact that Mr. John Douvre made his fortune in extensive operations in coal, would show a master-mind in the family, which would determine to give his child a really valuable education, that would enable her to care for his fortune when he retired from this world. She was the very type of girl to make an actual conquest of education, to master it, and to stand abreast

\* The "300,000" comprise that element of New York society next in importance to the 1,400; the number includes the select of Brooklyn.—EDS.



with her class, even with the best men in it.

The most striking trait of the very rich is tenacity, both in holding what they have and in acquiring what they haven't. A poorer girl with a few brothers to baby her, and an imbecile mother, would have ridden through college, if at all, on ponies, making eyes at the good-looking professors all the time. The college-bred girl is quite as much a factor of the coming civilization, and even the present civilization, as the girl of the plutocracy, the bachelor girl. When we come to combine these types, how much more advanced in certain directions is the result than the most accurate prognosticator of social ethics could conceive.

After a second refreshing sleep, Miss Douvre awoke to feel that she suffered no fur-



ther from any shock to her nerves. Instantly her fully recovered faculties set to work to unravel all the mystery with which she was invested. Her first duty was to investigate her room, divine to what it could belong, how she really came there, and where in this wide world she might be. On these points she had answers from Mr. Pegassus, but she wished to answer for herself. Some girls would have eyed the things in "a man's room," envied its possessor, and determined to capture him by any one or more of various devices known to the sex, such as sentimentalisms, fears, doubts, thanks, and cranks.

First, Miss Douvre began with Mr. Pegassus. She was certain that of late he had been spending all his time in ballooning. Second, she had read full descriptions of his



air-ship, though she had thus far thought it best not to so inform him, and was convinced after examination that she occupied his state-room, which could only be located in the *Americus*. Third, she had recovered her memory sufficiently to know that her horse had met with a tragic, instantaneous death, at the time of which she had been seized and had lost consciousness. What could have accomplished her seizure? It must have been the guy-rope, and if so, the heavy iron drag must be hidden in the body of her favorite horse. Fourth, she had not been killed, and hence must have been drawn up into the balloon and rescued from a frightful death. Fifth, she was not indebted to Mr. Pegassus for the rescue; on the contrary, he had narrowly escaped an unconscious murder. Lastly, it was an accident on the



part of each that led to the predicament. Hence she owed him no thanks, except for courtesies aboard his ship; while he owed her apologies, and should forever bless his stars that there had been nothing more serious.

Her next idea alarmed her; the balloon must now be in air. At the thought she sprang from the couch and gazed out. A faint streak of light in the East indicated the approach of dawn. Above and below her were dense, black clouds hurrying in opposite directions. No earth being visible, she could not be dizzy. She noted that the great, majestic ship was descending slightly, and she worked on the problem of the meaning of the descent and the course Mr. Pegasus would likely pursue. Gradually she divined what a gentleman would do consid-



ering all the circumstances, and Mr. Pegasus was a gentleman. He would land her on her own steps if possible, and never reveal the truth, nor let her know what had really happened. It is always thus with true gentlemen and true friends. What they do for others they keep to themselves, if done out of friendship; silence is the test of friendship, as it is of the greatness of all acts which are best kept secret for the good of all concerned.

Now that she knew the worst, at least up to this moment, knew the story as if he had told her all, she looked in his little mirror to see if she were frightened, and if any hairs had turned white. There were no such signs visible; certainly she felt no fear. Why was it? Would she not be in fear if any other than Mr. Pegassus were navigat-



ing the balloon? Would she allow this man to carry out his original design as she conceived it must be, or request him to go on with the sail and let her enjoy the novelty?

His design would relieve her friends from any possible grief, and absolutely save her from publicity. Even if Lord Hector gave her name to the public and she could affirm she walked home, and prove it by her presence there in the morning, what could the best sensationally conducted newspaper say? She did not believe his lordship, or any other man who had one spark of manhood about him, would reveal her name as the owner of the dead horse except in case of her total disappearance. On the other hand, if she chanced a little ride, what immense mystery! what columns and pages of talk! what a world-renowned heroine she would



become ! It was not in her nature to desire to become the subject of such heroicism. Still, there was one way to accomplish both ends, that is, enjoy a ride and still reach home before the light of day, by which no one need be any the wiser.

At first she had been a little indignant at the little deceits which had been practised by Mr. Pegassus, but the more she thought on the subject, the more charmed she became with the man and his admirable management of the affair to her benefit. He was a real general, and thereafter he should command her forces socially if she could prevail upon him. She looked through the breaking darkness, but could see little of the car and its contents. Instinct taught her that every man was there somewhere, and at his place, wide awake. So far she had



been peering through the window, but now she opened the door, very timidly, and as timidly stepped out and against the rail of the car. From far below she could hear the tremendous roaring of the hurricane and in imagination see trees bending and *débris* flying. It was a revelation to her of a kind which she did not care to comprehend all at once. She stepped back, opened the door, and leaned against the post, then called Mr. Pegassus gently by name.

That sweet little sound conveying his name to him from such lips caused the man to spring to the state-room door. Had she been listening to his meditations which he had dared not so much as pronounce? If so, had she forgiven them after seeing him cast them overboard? He had not so much as a suspicion that she had fathomed the in-



vesting mystery while he had been meditating. Still, the balloon was manœuvring, getting prepared to force a descent through the hurricane at some point which would enable him to land in the right place. He had to measure forces both of his own and nature's, and so begin the descent at such a distance from the city as would take into consideration the drift to which both a balloon and a vessel at sea are subject, on account of the currents. Such being the case, he must resort to some subterfuge to keep her in the state-room and asleep for at least an hour or two longer.

"Did you call?" he asked, with freezing politeness.

"I certainly did, Mr. Pegassus. This before-dawn air is fine, and I thought perhaps you might be induced to enjoy it with me."



She smiled so sweetly that he almost relented, and again wondered if, though rich, she regarded him as respectable.

“It is delicious air, as you say, Miss Douvre, as Central Park air usually is, but I am on the point of retiring for a little sleep, as I feel very much fatigued. If you will permit me, I should say you had best follow my example. It will still be time enough two, or even three, hours hence, to arise and enjoy the morning air. Indeed, I think the air, from three to five o'clock, is malarious. You need rest, and, pardon me, so do I.”

The man hated himself from that moment. It seemed like forcing her to sleep against her will, and perhaps necessities.

Miss Douvre was exceedingly amused. The farce was too preposterous for further straining at dramatic power. How affected



his icy politeness! How well he acted his part! How noble in him to make himself disagreeable even in order to best serve her interests! "Mr. Pegassus," she answered, gently, "before you retire, permit me to relieve your mind on one point. I am not in the least injured."

"Thank Heaven!"

"And not being injured, am not in the need of further sleep. Do you know, I think you had best take the state-room and sleep while I assume your watch on the car. I should like to witness the sunrise, beginning with the dawn previous to the rise. I also feel it my duty to share some of the watch with you."

The man was utterly astounded. He looked at her and gasped. Had she really ascertained her environment and was un-



daunted? "But really, my dear Miss Douvre, you *must* need more sleep. You talk as if you were on a passenger train instead of in the shepherd's quarters in Central Park, where you fell from your horse."

"Oh, well, it doesn't so much matter. Please come here and look at the barograph.\* If you had not a disabled barometer, I should compute the altitude of these shepherd's quarters at over three miles."

"Oh! of course, it is a crazy affair. But where did you learn to compute altitude on a barometer?"

"At the Harvard Annex, to be sure!"

"Were you graduated there?"

"Certainly, and took the honors in 1887. Do you know, the vernier of this anemo-

\* The barograph is a machine connected electrically with the barometer, which keeps the record of the barometer.—EDS.



graph is rapidly approaching the hurricane point? Perhaps you should call your shepherds on deck, dogs and all, else the sheep may get spilled."

The man actually gasped in alarm. She must have discovered her predicament. He hadn't a moment's time. He ordered all hands to their places. The balloon was descending into the storm area to test it and determine in what manner New York could best and most safely be reached. In an instant he was at her side. Almost rudely he pushed the state-room door wide open and grasped at her arm to thrust her inside.

Quickly she moved beyond the door and laughed at him.

"No," she said, "I will remain here. This is to be a royal battle between the elements of your dynamo and the elements



of Nature. It may be the only chance of my life to witness such a scene."

The man glanced at her with admiration and pride. She really intended to enjoy his great air-ship and see it battle with the elements on scientific principles. At that instant the door closed with a bang, and the enormous aërostat careened, then closed with the crest of the hurricane. As it sank deeper into the storm, the anemograph\* registered seventy-five miles per hour. In order to stand comparatively still it was necessary for the dynamo to exert a force equal to at least thirty elements. Such was the theory, but as a matter of fact the engineer made use of fifty, and part of the time the available force equal to seventy-two

\* The anemometer measures the velocity of the wind; the anemograph is a machine connected electrically with it, which keeps the record of it.—EDS.



elements, in working the propeller against this furious storm. Theory should have driven this balloon against a wind blowing seventy-five miles per hour at the rate of one mile in eighteen minutes. Perhaps the propeller did not work at its best on this particular occasion, or perhaps the great moisture in the atmosphere, the floods of water pouring from the clouds as the airship neared the earth, were too much for any power invented by man. Be this as it may, the tests were not satisfactory to Mr. Pegassus, and he almost feared to make the descent. It was some minutes before the propeller, revolving at a rate of some five hundred and forty revolutions per minute halted the momentum of the balloon. Under that powerful pressure she obeyed her helm, and the wind howled past.



"This is glorious!" exclaimed the girl, as she noted the mastery, the slackening of speed of the air-ship from seventy-five miles per hour to about ten. "No wonder the drag killed my poor bay horse. The wonder ceases there, and begins on my happy escape. Do you often go out on these girl-catching expeditions, Mr. Pegassus?"

The poor man paled at the thought.

"How can you!" he exclaimed.

"My friend, the best policy is to laugh while we may. The poor Earl, thrown on the grass and having his broker-advanced toilet disarranged, had no cause for merriment. We have everything amusing on our side. This barograph is all right. We are now only a mile high, and your anemometer whirls faster and faster. Surely the anemograph registers seventy-seven miles per hour.



If I am not mistaken, the hurricane increases as we approach the earth. Do you think you can cope with it?"

Mr. Pegassus was aghast with amazement. She read his scientific apparatus at a glance, talked familiarly of vernier scales, anemographs and anemometers, barographs and barometers. What next surprise was in store for him? He, like the storm, was positively mastered. He wondered if she knew her whereabouts during that wonderful conversation, when she asked him all about the history of the balloon, and if she had quietly laughed at him as she had done about the shepherd's quarters in Central Park. He wondered, too, if she could be aware of the peril of the final plunge to earth and the landing.

"Miss Douvre," said the man, seriously,



“dissimulation in your presence is impossible. I was in hopes to conceal all this from you. I might have succeeded with a woman unknown to the halls of learning. I am glad that it was you and not some other human being of either sex, who was destined to be captured by my guy-rope. I am glad to be relieved of the possibility of ever being obliged to reveal the circumstances of this enforced ride to you, since you have learned all on your own account. I am also proud that you are pleased to enjoy your thrilling experience. At the same time let me urge you that complete safety lies only in that state-room. I desire to say something to impress you with that state-room in which you have found shelter. You may also find escape from death in there. The state-room is a separate affair from the bal-



loon. It is so constructed as to be complete in itself. Should the balloon ever be dashed against the rocks or the earth, or otherwise, the state-room would fall from its place. It is completely bound in safety air-cushions. Do you observe the flagstaff on its top? That is really an immense parachute which is hoisted as an awning when the sun is too severe and we are running with the wind or in a calm. When closed, it usually carries the flag. Observe the knob in the state-room wall. When that knob is pulled, the parachute expands. If the aërostat should explode high in the air and I happened to be in the state-room, I should pull the knob, the parachute would open, and this state-room, detached from the car, would float calmly to the ground; but even if it struck hard, I estimate that the air-cushions would break



the fall sufficiently to allow me to escape with life and limb. Men have descended safely several thousand feet clinging to a parachute; why not my little state-room constructed of light, airy materials, and its occupants? The parachute has a diameter of eighteen feet, and that ought to carry one, state-room and all, safely to earth. Let me beg of you to keep within it. I begin to fear that we are in danger, the storm so increases as we near the earth. I reckon that the earth current is flowing from eighty-five to ninety miles per hour. My dynamo was never made to compete with such a storm in conjunction with floods of rain. It may stand it, but it is doubtful. I take it that on general principles, you would rather descend to death than to be found missing in New York in the morning. If I am mis-



taken, one word, and we will fly far above this hurricane, and proceed to the Rocky Mountains for safety in descent."

The girl turned and for the first time looked and felt toward him the fulness of her gratitude. He would, then, sacrifice his life and even hers and also his magnificent air-ship that she might escape scandal. There are moments when an eternity flashes into one's life. She saw past, present, and future in that one instant, as regarded their two lives. In the glance she gave him he read and felt as much. She stepped close to him. "Mr. Pegassus," she said, "I desire to remain outside as long as it is absolutely safe. The instant of danger to this air-ship, I will enter that compartment on one condition, and no other."

"And that?" he asked feebly.



“That you enter with me.”

“Miss Douvre!” there was a tear visible in his eye. Could nothing be concealed from her?

“Promise!” she entreated.

“Do you mean life or death together?” he asked, taking her hand.

“Life or death together.”

“And forever?”

“Forever.”



## CHAPTER VIII.

### SUNRISE IN NEW YORK.

Not another word was spoken for some time. He merely bent and passionately kissed her hand. These two had known each other for several years and perhaps longer. They had met night after night in the *salon* of the home or opera without so much as experiencing the first approach to sentiment. Although they had conversed somewhat nightly, danced occasionally, etc., neither had come actually to know the other.

How often do we see this principle illustrated in life! Two people travel along the social highway for years, their hands al-



most touching and their salutes made daily to each other, scarcely feeling each other's presence. Suddenly, some new element enters their lives, and of each at the same time. They turn and, in each other's face, read the truth. Dynamite does not explode until touched. A train does not start until the engineer grasps the throttle. Some new element must come in to unite or ignite the others.

It was true that she and her bevy of admirers had heretofore not seriously attracted his attention; he was given to other species of investigation than that of the feminine nature. His solitariness in society would have escaped her notice entirely in times past but for his mysterious eccentricity, his passion for ballooning. He had never attempted to penetrate the crowd that sur-



rounded her to reach her intellect. If women had intellects above the ordinary he was, strangely enough, acquiring the fact as the probable last act of his life. In fact, it had been a matter of indifference to him in times past whether the sex possessed a possible intellect or not. He himself was endowed with a massive intellect which held him remote from all except the most distinguished of his own sex.

If Mr. Pegassus had ever thought on the subject of matrimony at all, it was with a shudder at the possibility of enduring a life with a woman unpossessed of a masterful mind. He had found it intolerable attempting to endure the feminine section of his own family, and whom, at times of unreasoning thought, he regarded as so many animals, not of the field, but actually of his own



household. He held in contempt their total lack of comprehension of his life and its import. They totally failed to render to him that respect which was his due. He never failed in one iota to place in their way every courtesy, every mark of politeness and distinguished consideration. In return, they attempted unwarranted and impertinent familiarity with him. There is no relationship, either matrimonial, by blood ties, or even in friendship, that warrants undue familiarity.

Men who know their position in the world, and know what respect to them means, not only to themselves, but their families, cannot tolerate, without ill-concealed contempt, unwarranted familiarity, whether from wives, sisters, brothers, lovers, or friends. Such of these as possess good breeding will never



cross the line of gentility, nobility, unselfishness, and courtesy.

Love is a thousandfold enhanced by constant marks of respect, unobtrusive respect. How many a high-bred man has gone from the door of the woman he loved, never to return, because of her assumption of a familiarity that destroyed the very germ of love.

The badly-trained girl oversteps her boundaries in these days of high-bred, proud men. Her imprudence betrays her association with men who live as the beasts, mostly besotted with drink, and given to freedom with women. Such men, no matter how generous, are not gentlemen. When a girl turns from the presence of these beasts to that of gentlemen, and attempts the same liberty of speech, she becomes an intolerable nuisance. Her impertinence may be toler-



ated in silence, but not for long, and she some day wonders, not without pain, why men whom she knows to be real gentlemen, desert her for less pretentious women.

The women of the Pegassus family were evidently of the impertinent type, at least from the brother's standpoint. He had learned to affect tolerance of them and the sex rather than to appear to be a misanthrope, an eccentric, a boor, and so he had preserved passable relations with his family, the human family, and particularly the ladies, by artificially tendering courtesy to all and being seen on festive occasions. In the present moment left him in which to think, it occurred to him as something extraordinary that the very girl of all others, the least suspected of a master mind, the daughter of a wealth-won aristocrat, an evident



(to him) flirt of the most pronounced type, the flame for all butterflies, the woman who must regard men in general with almost a contempt commensurate with his own for women, should suddenly be revealed to him, under awful circumstances, as a graduate of the Harvard Annex with honors, to whom his science, acquired by a life-long study, was practically the conquest of a night—and a very dark, stormy night at that.

What an absurd travesty on cold human reason that this pair, acquainted with each other by some years of social intercourse, and through it all totally unattractive to each other, should be confronted by means of a stupendous freak of destiny, and like a flash of lightning discover that the by-word which each had discarded as unworthy of belief—love—had an actual place in the hu-



man economy. "Perhaps not love, after all, but destiny," he argued, with a scientific man's tenacity, "which sometimes reveals two natures born to entwine."

Wheatstone invented a machine by which he measured the duration of a flash of lightning to be 1,200,000th part of a second. Owing to an optical illusion, it is commonly supposed to last a tenth part of a second, and by some a whole second. Did not the hero confess awhile back that there is no such thing as love except in fiction; that fiction must assume the virtue if real life hath it not? How humbled was Mr. Pegasus now, that in a time so brief as a flash of lightning, real life had provided a reason for the existence of the truest love, beside which in all fiction, perhaps, there was nothing to compare! He was beaten on every point.



Fact was stranger than fiction. Love was an actuality. The predicament of himself and Miss Douvre was a full reason for the existence of love.

It was a strange spectacle, the lady on the promenade of the car of the *Americus* in riding habit, her hat in its place, her whip in hand as if ready to mount. The hurricane that swept the ship from the westward right down toward the massive brownstones and brick of the metropolis at a rate of ninety miles per hour, formed her environment. No effort was made to check the mad flight of the *Americus* now, only to direct it. The time was getting short before the sun should rise and expose the lady to scandal, or at least, annoying notoriety.

Paint the picture, O ye Dorés—the environment of hurricane above, a vast mass of





IT WAS A STRANGE SPECTACLE, THE LADY ON THE PROMENADE OF THE  
CAR OF THE AMERICUS.







flooded city approaching beneath ; a background for the lady, of aërostat and car, a mere speck in the maelstrom of elements. Yet this girl, by reason of her college-trained mind and superior intellect, had grasped in one short hour what was forever the despair of "the finest" police department of the world. In the faintest gray of dawn, a little state-room and a few technical instruments had enabled her to read all that had happened that night, all that was happening, and all that was likely to happen ; and she had read all that was in the heart of one master man from the one key, in effect that he was a gentleman.

In that one hand-clasp this strange pair had read their future and temporarily dismissed it. The escaping gas began to cause some compression of the great aërostat.



"We could inflate the balloon, rise again and escape," remarked the man, hoarsely, as he saw their terrible danger ahead, "but that would result in all the world hearing the story and laughing at it as the very personification of all that is fictitious, an invention of some fertile mind for the shielding of your escapades."

"Better death!" was the only answer she gave him. Her face showed a thrilling interest in the mad flight through air.

"Jersey Palisades!" called the lookout.

"Drop the drag!" roared Pegassus.

"Drag was lost in Central Park, sir," bawled the captain.

"Drop the guy-rope, then; it may catch."

The guy-rope was let out to a length of one hundred and fifty feet. Plenty of rope was left on the cylinder of the windlass so



that the ship, if caught, should not be hauled taut and smashed.

All looked below upon Jersey City to see the end of the rope knock over chimneys, cornices, and whatever it could stir, but it did not seem to catch. In an instant the *Americus* flew to the Hudson.

“Let out more gas,” roared Pegassus. “Stand by the windlass, captain, with two men.”

“Aye, sir.”

The huge collapsing aërostat swept across the Hudson and over the City of New York in almost a second's time. Rain poured in floods; the streets resembled rivers; the hurricane seemed to have razed the projections from all roofs. There was nothing which the guy rope could catch except the cables of the East River Bridge, and it was



not desirable to be held in air unable to escape.

There still was evidently fifty thousand cubic feet of gas in the bag. In that one second of mad plunge, Mr. Pegassus saw that instead of the guy-rope catching on the bridge, the balloon was doomed to collide with that structure.

With a bound he sprang forward, grasped Miss Douvre in his arms and almost fell into the state-room with her. He slammed the door shut and locked it. At that instant, the great aërostat, still one-half inflated, moving at a rate of ninety miles per hour, struck the middle span of the East River Bridge near the New York tower, and exploded with a frightful detonation, which, but for the roar of the hurricane, would have startled the entire city. The gold-



beater's skin and ribbons were ground to fragments and blew away with the hurricane, no doubt, as not one was ever found. The car, stopped by the force of the explosion, rebounded and struck the river side of the tower and broke in pieces. The captain and his men were hurled against the cruel stones of the tall shaft of granite, their bodies, masses of jelly, being cast into the river, while torrents of rain washed the stains from the structure, leaving not one scintilla of record. The machinery, broken into thousands of pieces, sank forever from sight to be carried out to sea in the tide-swept channel.

But how about the state-room? Loosened from its supports, it fluttered to the bosom of the river. The aëronaut had pulled the knob, the parachute opened, and the wind



bore it into the river, then swept it across to the Brooklyn side to the base of the East tower. Finding the girl in his arms, and each uninjured but terribly scared, he grasped the knob with all his strength, and closed the parachute. Inside, during those awful moments, the man and girl were clasped in each other's arms with lips together in one long farewell kiss, as if in the embrace of death. Neither had expected to escape, and more delicious rapture was compressed in that one moment than all their lives had known.

“Darling !” he whispered.

She answered not, only clung to him the more madly, as if loath to be interrupted in their rapture, even for the sake of living thereafter.

“We are all that is left of the *Americus*,



I fear," he said, sadly, thinking of the awful fate of his men.

It was still gray dawn of morning. Not a boat was stirring, not a car passing on the bridge overhead. The terrible storm had stopped all traffic, and driven even the bridge attendants into safe shelter. No ears save theirs had heard the explosion ; no eyes save theirs had witnessed the frightful tragedy.

Independent of the storm, it was the sole period of inactivity of the day in New York, when the early milk-cart has ceased to rattle on the pavement, having delivered its burden to the retailers, when nearly all hands have deserted the newspaper offices and reached home, when even the most early rising world is taking a last wink.

Mr. Pegassus looked out of the window to



see the drift of his vessel. It was standing directly at the base of the Brooklyn tower where the west wind seemed to hold it fast. He cautiously opened the window and pulled the state-room along the rocks and around to the dock, thence slowly along the dock into the slip. Finding a place on a level with his head, he cautiously and with exceeding difficulty assisted Miss Douvre through on to the dock, owing to the careenings of his fragile boat, then passed out some little effects he wished to save, then followed in person. He forced open the door of the state-room; the little structure careened, filled with water and sank, carrying with it the very last evidence of the aërial trip.

Hastily throwing a heavy oil-skin about their mutual persons, and raising an um-





OCCASIONALLY CARRYING HER WHERE THE WATER LAY IN POOLS.







brella, pretty much all of the effects saved from the wreck, he passed his arm about the girl inside the oil-skin, and started for the streets, occasionally carrying her where the water lay in pools. For every time he ferried her through the pools in this manner he exacted a considerable penalty of kisses, and there was no one abroad to dispute his right; and as for the lady she did not seem to disapprove of the pools and storm at all.

At the entrance of the bridge stood a lone coach. Into it he placed his charge, gave his orders and got inside, leaving the coachman to do the remaining battle with the elements. Inside the vehicle it is possible this exhausted pair continued their love-making. I will not say. The world was still dozing and there were no witnesses.

At one corner removed from the Douvre



mansion, the pair alighted. The coachman was dismissed. All was quiet. No one was visible. Silently they walked to the arched entrance of the great house. The lady took her pass-key and inserted it in the lock of the iron latticed gate, though even then the man was clasping her in his strong embrace.

“Can you manage it, darling?” he whispered. “Every vestige of that aërial trip is destroyed save you and me.”

“It shall be our secret for life,” she replied, softly. “Yes, I can manage my part easily. I shall steal silently into bed, unseen and unheard. To-morrow, if called upon, I shall deny all knowledge of the accident. I do not believe, however, I shall be asked to explain. My father is not the man to ask such a thing, and he is the only





“AND FOREVER?” “FOREVER.”







one having the right. Who, then, can gossip? The sun seems to be struggling to rise, dear. You will come again to-day?"

"Yes, my love."

"And forever?"

"Forever."

**THE END.**













Q.B.26

Coltrane

GOLD MEDAL

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L.O.G.

List 556

29-

COLGATE'S  
PERFUMES  
AND  
SOAPS.















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